The Gallstone Elimination Report

How to Get Rid of Your Gallstones and Save Your Gallbladder Quickly, Safely, and Naturally

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Table of Contents

Introduction: **You Can Save Your Gallbladder…Even If You Have Gallstones** **4**

Chapter 1: **An Important Fact About Gallstones** **7**

Chapter 2: **Four Powerful Natural Options to Heal Your Gallbladder** **8**

Chapter 3: **Why Your Gallbladder is Important** **9**

Chapter 4: **What Are Gallstones?** **11**

Chapter 5: **Healthy Bile Flow: The Key to Gallbladder Health** **14**

Chapter 6: **Risk Factors for Gallstones** **18**

Chapter 7: **Symptoms of a Gallbladder Attack** **20**

Chapter 8: **What Can Really Happen If They Remove Your Gallbladder** **22**

Chapter 9: **Gallstone Treatment and Prevention—General Guidelines** **27**

Chapter 10: **Other Gallbladder Relief Tips** **32**

Chapter 11: **Healing Your Gallbladder with a Healthy Diet** **35**

Chapter 12: **Foods That Are Good for Your Gallbladder** **38**

Chapter 13: **Gallbladder Diet—Frequently Asked Questions** **39**

Chapter 14: **The 12 Nutrients That Keep Your Liver and Gallbladder Strong** **42**

Chapter 15: **Olive Oil: A Healthy Choice** **53**

Chapter 16: **The Remarkable Benefits of Moderate Exercise** **55**

Chapter 17: **Healing Plants: What You Need to Know** **59**

Chapter 18: **Simple and Effective Natural Home Remedies Techniques To Soothe Your Gallstone Pain** **61**

Chapter 19: **The 11 Most Effective Herbal Remedies for the Gallbladder** **64**

Chapter 20: **The Emergency Gallstone Relief Plan: The 4-Step Action Plan For Treating Gallstone Attacks** **70**

Chapter 21: **The Gallbladder Cleanse: How it Gets Rid of Your Gallstones** **73**

Chapter 22: **The Gallbladder Cleanse: Step-by-Step Instructions** **76**

Chapter 23: **Gallbladder Cleanse Guidelines** **82**

Chapter 24: **The Gallbladder Cleanse: Frequently Asked Questions** **88**

Disclaimer **92**

Introduction

You Can Save Your Gallbladder

…Even If You Have Gallstones

Your doctor may have told you to have your gallbladder removed. Nevertheless, there's a very good chance you can still save your gallbladder. There are safe and effective natural alternatives to surgery.

Did you know that simple changes to your diet and lifestyle can restore your gallbladder's health, eliminate your gallstones, and prevent new ones from ever appearing again?

It's true. Thousands of people have done it, and so can you.

First of all, let's examine something your doctor might have told you: "You don't need your gallbladder." **Nothing could be further from the truth.**

As you'll soon learn, you certainly do need your gallbladder to keep your digestive system balanced and to live a full, healthy life. Just because it's a small organ doesn't make it any less necessary.

The fact is, it's not too late to save your gallbladder. ..

- ✓ Even if you have gallstones.
- ✓ Even if you have suffered gallbladder attacks.
- ✓ Even if your doctor told you to cut it.

You still have time to save your gallbladder if you learn some positive, healthy habits that will also make the rest of your body feel great.

So start on the road to saving your gallbladder now—it's one of the smartest decisions you'll ever make!

Surgery is Not the Only Option

You might be surprised to learn that doctors will usually not discuss viable natural options to surgery. That's understandable…doctors don't make money off of natural treatments.

When it comes down to it, most doctors get paid very well for just two things: **cutting and prescribing drugs**. That's it. Not preventing diseases or helping you find natural alternatives.

Treatment of gallbladder diseases is a **$5.8 billion** dollar a year industry, the second highest cost of any degenerative disease. Almost half a million gallbladders are cut every year. **Nearly every one of those surgeries could have been prevented.**

The question is, are you just going to be just another set of zeros in your doctor's bank account, or are you going to take back control of your health?

Surgery is Not a Permanent Solution

Gallstones can return even after they remove your gallbladder. Many people still suffer from pain, gas, bloating, diarrhea and other symptoms that they thought would be "cured" by gallbladder surgery.

Not only that, but gallbladder surgery is far riskier than you may have been told.

The death and injury rates from gallbladder surgery are higher than most doctors will admit. In some cases, these rates are getting higher every year.

It's incredibly easy for things to go wrong during the operation…and incredibly hard to fix them correctly once they do go wrong.

Believe it or not, most surgical injuries and accidents are not even detected at the time they happen!

Many times, it's only after you go home and start feeling gut-wrenching pain that they will try to fix the problem… if it's not already too late, of course!

There Are Effective Alternatives to Surgery

The answer in most cases is not to remove your gallbladder, but to cleanse your system of the gallstones, toxic impurities, and waste products clogging up your gallbladder, liver, and the rest of your digestive system.

There are many viable natural options that can cleanse your system so that you save your gallbladder, end your pain, and get back your cherished health.

Here's just some of these proven natural alternatives that have produced remarkable, life-changing benefits for countless number of people:

- Natural, non-surgical methods such as gallbladder cleanses.
- Herb-based therapies such as infusions and compresses.
- Small, simple changes to your eating and lifestyle habits.

The best part is, these methods are so inexpensive and easy to apply that just about anyone can start enjoying their dramatic benefits right away.

So get ready...

You are about to start on the road to eliminating your gallstones, saving your gallbladder, and giving you more energy, stamina, and a greater overall sense of well-being than you may have ever had.

Chapter 1

An Important Fact About Gallstones

You are not alone, between **16 million and 22 million Americans** have gallstones. Only a small percentage actually get surgery, however. In fact, most people with gallstones have chosen to live with them.

You can take it one step further. You can not only choose to live with your gallstones, you can also choose to do something about them.

Fact: Your gallstone problems don't end once they've taken out your gallbladder…simply because your liver continues producing bile, whether your gallbladder is there or not.

Would you cut off your nose if you had a cold? That might seem like a strange question, but it relates to gallbladder surgery…removing your gallbladder because it's inflamed or because you have gallstones doesn't cure the root of your gallstone problems any more than removing your nose cures the root of your cold.

Your doctor probably won't mention all the risks of surgery, either, such as the increased risk of bowel cancer once they remove your gallbladder—caused by the constant dripping of bile into your intestines.

Other post-surgery risks include suffering chronic diarrhea and increased blood cholesterol levels.

Is there an effective natural alternative?

Thankfully, the answer is YES!! The natural alternative to surgery is to undertake some basic, positive dietary and lifestyle changes that will save your gallbladder and help you feel better in every way.

This book will be your guide to learning everything you need to know in order to eliminate your gallstones and avoid forming new ones in the future. After reading and applying the suggestions in this book, you will probably feel more informed and more in control of your health than ever before. This is not only a great feeling, but a responsibility that we all have.

Chapter 2

Four Powerful Natural Options to Heal Your Gallbladder

In this book, you will learn to save your gallbladder and live a healthier life with these safe, proven methods that have worked wonders for centuries for millions of people all over the world:

1. **Nutritional Approach**—Food is one of our most potent weapons against disease. You can enjoy simple, easy-to-prepare meals that can prevent gallstones from returning, improve your digestive system, and boost your energy level.
2. **Moderate Physical Activity**—Regular exercise is a key component of any healthy lifestyle…and you don't need expensive equipment or club memberships to reap the healthful benefits.
3. **Herbal Remedies**—Plant-derived medications have healed people for centuries. In fact, many of our modern medications are based on traditional folk remedies. A host of safe, inexpensive herbal treatments can complement your other gallstone-fighting measures.
4. **Natural Therapies**—These simple natural methods can reward you with a healthy gallbladder and a cleaner, more optimized system.

For best results, combine all four. Since each person is different, start slowly, keep close track of your body's reactions, and consult a qualified health professional whenever you need professional guidance.

Chapter 3

Why Your Gallbladder is Important

Removing even a small organ like the gallbladder can disrupt the entire digestive process, possibly triggering a domino effect of infection and decay that can wreak havoc on nearly every organ in your body.

A well-maintained gallbladder is critical for your digestive system to function properly. The gallbladder makes certain that **bile**, the digestive liquid secreted by the liver, is used to its full potential.

What does bile do?

Bile plays many vital roles. It helps digest foods by breaking down fats, oils, and other nutrients. In addition, bile helps prevent diseases by maintain the level of friendly bacteria in the body and destroying harmful organisms. Furthermore, bile eliminates toxins and other unwanted materials from your system by stimulating peristalsis (the rhythmic movement of the digestive muscles) and lubricating the intestinal walls, two actions which help push waste matter out of the body.

Bile's role in digestion is especially critical. After it leaves the gallbladder and enters the small intestine, bile helps breaks down fatty molecules sufficiently to allow fat and fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K to enter the bloodstream through the intestinal lining. If this bile function is impaired, you risk not getting enough nutrients from your food, leading to weakness and malnutrition.

Bile and the gallbladder

The gallbladder is the key to processing bile correctly so that bile can perform its various duties. The gallbladder goes through a sequence of three key steps to ensure that bile gets properly processed:

STEP 1: Stores the bile produced by the liver—The liver makes large amounts of bile –**2 to 3 pints per day (.946 to 1.42 liters)**—and passes it through the various bile ducts into the gallbladder, where the bile is stored until it is needed by the duodenum (the first section of the small intestine) to digest the fats and oils in the foods coming out of the stomach.

Without the gallbladder, most of the bile secreted by the liver would be lost, making it impossible for your small intestine to completely break down and extract all the nutrients from the food you eat.

STEP 2: Concentrates the bile from the liver—An important event takes place here: The gallbladder removes most of the bile's fluid, leaving only a few tablespoons of concentrated bile.

This transforms the bile into a thicker and more powerful substance. Most scientists agree that this is by far the best way for bile to become potent enough to dissolve fats effectively.

STEP 3: Regulates the flow of bile—The liver constantly produces bile, even when the stomach or small intestine contain no food.

All that bile needs to be stored in the gallbladder for future use. Without a gallbladder…it will drip non-stop into your delicate intestinal linings, possibly leading to chronic diarrhea… recurring irritation…even cancer.

It's the gallbladder's task to retain that bile and release it only when the duodenum requires it—not a second before or after.

Chapter 4

What Are Gallstones?

Gallstones are the most common cause of gallbladder problems. They are hard, rock-like formations largely made up of the excess cholesterol deposits left behind by the bile in the liver, gallbladder, and bile duct tissues. Over time, these deposits build up into **biliary sludge**, and, if not flushed out, into gallstones.

Gallstones can be as small as a grain of sand or as large as a golf ball. Besides cholesterol, gallstones also contain smaller amounts of bile, pigments, lecithin, and proteins.

There are two main types of gallstones commonly diagnosed in the United States: **cholesterol and pigment gallstones**.

About 80% of gallstones diagnosed in the United States are considered cholesterol gallstones, because they are composed mainly of cholesterol (even though cholesterol makes up only about 5% of bile). The remaining 20% are referred to as pigment stones, since they are formed mostly from bile salts.

Cholesterol stones are usually green in color, while pigment stones are brown or black. Some people have a mixture of both kinds.

Causes of gallstones

Cholesterol accumulation in the bile is the main cause of biliary sludge and gallstones. Cholesterol can build up in the bile for various reasons, including:

(1) **Oversaturation of cholesterol in the bile.** The bile cannot keep all the chlolesterol compounds dissolved so some of them settle into your organs, turning into biliary sludge and potentially into gallstones.

(2) **Underproduction of bile by the liver.** This makes the bile flow too weak to flush out cholesterol deposits from the gallbladder.

(3) **Undersupply of lecithin and bile salts in the bile**. Lecithin and bile salts are fat-carrying substances especially designed to keep cholesterol molecules dissolved.

Complications Resulting from Gallstones

Almost 80% of all gallstones produce no symptoms and can remain **"silent" (asymptomatic)** for years. Symptoms can take about 8-10 years to develop. Untreated gallstones can lead to peritonitis, pancreatitis, and gallbladder cancer.

Gallstones can also contribute to a weak spleen (leading to hypoglycemia), sleep disturbances such as insomnia and nightmares, dizziness, a bad taste in the mouth, vomiting of bile, painful flanks, anger and depression.

Gallstone problems can also lead to acute pancreatitis and ascending cholangitis, which can happen if gallstones block the pancreatic or bile duct and become infected. Severe, recurrent abdominal pain is also common in people with gallstones.

How fast do gallstones form?

They grow about a tenth of an inch (2 mm) in diameter every year. Gallstone symptoms can start to show up within 8-10 years. By that time, a small, grain-sized stone can grow to a 1-inch diameter stone (about the size of a quarter). You could have dozens or even hundreds of these gallstones. Waiting until this stage to change your eating and lifestyle habits is not a wise idea.

Gallstones in the Liver

Many gallstones can actually begin forming in the liver, before moving into the gallbladder, where they grow larger. Still others build up in the narrow bile ducts that connect the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas.

Stones in the gallbladder are generally easier to detect with X-rays and ultrasounds than those in the liver and bile ducts, mainly because they're larger and more solid, or calcified.

This leaves patients in a dangerous position, though. By the time doctors find stones in the gallbladder, the stones can be so large and numerous that surgery seems like the only option.

Gallstones and Kidney Stones

Gallstones and kidney stones often occur together. Either kind can disrupt your liver and kidneys, as well as your entire digestive system. Since the kidneys and the gallbladder are near each other, stagnation in one organ can cause the other organ to become sluggish, as well. In order to reduce the chance of forming stones or suffering stagnation in either the gallbladder or the kidneys, it is best to cleanse both organs.

What Can Happen If I Don't Get Rid of My Gallstones?

It is important to dissolve and eliminate your gallstones. The natural methods described in this book can accomplish that easily and painlessly. If gallstones continue to give you pain, you are at a higher risk of the following dangerous complications and diseases:

- **Cholecystitis (gallbladder infection)**
- Infection of the ducts or liver
- **Bile duct obstruction**
- Bile leaks or abnormal ducts (resulting from cysts)
- **Biliary anomalies (abnormal anatomy of the bile system)**
- Liver disease
- **Cancer of the hepatobiliary system**

Chapter 5

Healthy Bile Flow: The Key to Gallbladder Health

The Gallbladder Cleanse you will learn in this book will improve the function of many parts of your body, including your digestive, immune, and metabolic systems. But the one thing the cleanse targets is the liver's ability to produce clean, flowing bile.

Healthy bile flow is a requirement for your body to work efficiently. And without proper bile flow, you will have little chance of dissolving and eliminating your gallstones and of preventing new gallstones from forming in the future.

So to understand why the Gallbladder Cleanse will work for you, read on to understand what bile really does and why it is such an important liquid in our bodies.

The Function of Bile

Bile has several important roles in keeping your body's metabolism healthy and balanced. But in order to give your body the greatest benefit, bile needs to be properly liquefied. Once bile is properly dissolved and flowing, it helps do several important things:

1. **Dissolves and prevent gallstones.**
2. Neutralizes stomach acids before they can burn the small and large intestines.
3. **Stimulates healthy peristalsis, which is the wave-like movement of the muscles in the intestines.**
4. Balances the immune system.
5. **Protects the liver and pancreas from caustic alkali burns of excess stomach acids.**
6. Kills bacteria, parasites, and candida in the intestines.
7. **Removes toxic fats and cholesterol from the body.**

What is biliary sludge?

With nutritional deficiencies and exposure to certain toxins, bile can thicken and form **biliary sludge**, which is a thick, sluggish bile residue that can clog up your liver and gallbladder walls and the ducts that connect these organs to the stomach, pancreas, and small intestine.

Biliary sludge makes it very hard for the gallbladder to get bile into the small intestine. Imagine trying to squeeze thick glue through a narrow straw—that's how difficult it is for bile to flow when the ducts are clogged with biliary sludge.

Gallstones can form when biliary sludge turns hard. For this reason, dissolving biliary sludge is just as important as dissolving gallstones.

The presence of biliary sludge and/or gallstones can also cause:

- Indigestion when you eat fats and oils.
- Trouble absorbing food.
- Constipation, diarrhea, or both.
- Gut-related auto-immune disorders.

What happens when the intestines don't receive enough bile?

Food coming from the stomach is mixed with **Hydrochloric Acid (HCL),** a very powerful substance produced by the stomach. Since bile is very alkaline, the intestines rely on it to neutralize HCL. If enough bile cannot get to the intestines, the stomach acids don't get completely neutralized, causing acid burns along the entire length of the small and large intestine—all 30 feet of it.

As a result, you can get ulcers, heartburn, and other types of digestive complaints. Without enough bile entering the intestines, your intestines can literally begin digesting themselves.

Another thing bile does in the intestines is to emulsify the fats and oils in the foods we eat. Emulsification is the process that makes fats and oils water soluble, which is necessary for our body to absorb the many vitamins which are fat soluble as well as to absorb essential fats and oils. If enough bile cannot get to the intestine, we can suffer malnutrition, even if we eat large quantities of food.

What happens when bile is unable to remove toxins from the body?

The liver processes thousands of toxins and chemicals every day. It then secretes those waste products into the bile, which carries it out of the body. The presence of gallstones and biliary sludge can clog the bile pathways, causing the toxins and chemicals to back up and begin accumulating in the bloodstream and tissues.

A sign that toxins are building up is an increase in cholesterol and bilirubin. If enough bile backs up, the whites of the eyes and the skin can take on a yellowish tint, which is referred to as jaundice.

How does bile back-up affect our immune system?

A blockage of the bile flow can impair our entire immune system. We usually think of the immune system as a set of infection-fighting white blood cells that float through the bloodstream. **But in fact, over half of our body's total immune system is located in the intestines.**

This makes it very important for sufficient bile to reach the intestines. The intestines are at the front lines of the fight against infection. While most full-blown infections rarely reach the bloodstream, the intestines are constantly at war with millions of harmful bacteria, parasites, and fungi.

Under so much pressure, it's easy for the intestines to become overly aggressive and attack our own tissues, resulting in auto-immune disorders. Bile helps to regulate the immune functions of the intestines so this doesn't happen.

Healthy bile flow is a natural defense against bacteria, parasites, and candida in the intestine. We all need this defense, since even the healthiest person has some degree of parasitic and fungal infection.

Any impairment in bile excretion also causes cholesterol levels to rise, since the only way for cholesterol to leave the body is through the bile. Increased bile cholesterol concentrations can raise the risk of gallstones and biliary sludge formation.

What can happen if bile backs up into the liver and pancreas?

The liver, pancreas, and gallbladder are all connected through the common bile duct. There are numerous valves that keep bile from backing up into the liver and pancreas. If a small stone makes its way into one of these valves, it will cause the valve to get stuck in the open position, allowing bile to enter the organs.

When bile leaving the gallbladder backs up into the liver and pancreas, it can cause caustic alkaline burns and irritation in these organs. It's a little-known fact that highly alkaline substances, such as bile (which has a pH of 9.5) can burn just as much as very acidic ones. Over long periods of time, alkaline burns can cause diabetes, hepatitis, and cancer.

Why is insufficient bile flow a problem?

Bile stimulates peristalsis, the rhythmic, wave-like motion of the intestinal muscles that moves food through the digestive tract. When insufficient bile is flowing to stimulate peristalsis, the result can be recurring constipation. Some people even experience constipation followed by diarrhea after eating.

When bile flow is insufficient, partially-digested food (which is filled with hydrochloric acid), will tend to just sit in the intestine because peristalsis is not stimulated. This not only leads to constipation, but at same time the hydrochloric acid starts to burn the intestines. Eventually, when too many acids build up, the intestines will react by purging themselves through a bout of diarrhea. This can remain a constant problem for as long as bile flow is not increased.

Chapter 6

Risk Factors for Gallstones

Certain factors that can make you more likely to develop gallstones are:

- **Gender**—Women are 4 times more likely than men to develop gallstones.
- **Age**—People over the age of 40 often have gallbladder disease.
- **Obesity**—Extra weight can cause your bile to be oversaturated with cholesterol.
- **Heredity**—Gallbladder problems tend to be passed down from generation to generation.

In addition, when combined with these other conditions, your gallstone risks multiply:

- **Food allergies**—Especially to eggs, pork, onions, fowl, dairy products, coffee, citrus, corn, beans, and nuts.
- **Digestive disorders**—Specifically those caused by HCL (hydrochloric acid) deficiency.
- **Body mass index**—Calculated as your weight divided by the square of your height.
- **Diet**—Regularly consuming foods high in saturated fats, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, and refined carbohydrates (sugars) and low in fiber is generally linked to gallbladder problems.
- **Extremely low-fat diet**—Every meal should contain about 10 grams of fat to achieve normal gallbladder contractions.

  Fats stimulate the gallbladder to contract sufficiently to empty its bile. Insufficient contractions could leave stagnant bile in the gallbladder, a potential cause of gallstones. Skipping meals can also reduce gallbladder contractions.
- **Certain medications**—Particularly estrogen and progestin. Also linked to gallstone risk: cholesterol-lowering drugs, thiazide diuretic drugs, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, certain antibiotics, anti-rejection drugs and prostaglandins.
- **Postmenopause**—Women past menopause who have gallstone family history should inform their doctor. Hormone-replacement therapy (HRT), a common prescription for postmenopausal problems, has estrogen, which raises cholesterol in bile, a risk factor for gallstones.
- **Excess estrogen caused by pregnancy.**

- **Lack of exercise**—Combined with excess calorie intake.
- **Intestinal diseases**
- **Cigarette smoking**
- **Alcohol use**
- **Caffeine**
- **Food intolerance**
- **Parasites**
- **Diabetes**
- **Rapid weight loss**—Your weight change during the past 2 years can have an effect on your risk of gallstones.
- **Stress**
- **Constipation**
- **Slow intestinal transit time**
- **Crohn's disease**
- **Cystic fibrosis**
- **Liver cirrhosis**

What are my chances of developing gallstones if I have a family history of gallstones?

Your chances of forming gallstones increase **up to 6 times** if gallstones run in your family. This makes it even more important to control other risk factors, like nutrition.

Researchers have actually discovered "gallstone genes" that may trigger gallstones in certain people. An improper diet can actually trigger these genes to speed up the process of developing gallstones . The typical **lithogenic (gallstone-forming)** diet—high-fat, high-sugar, high-animal protein—can cause biliary cholesterol hypersecretion, which leads to oversaturation of cholesterol in the bile.

Chapter 7

Symptoms of a Gallbladder Attack

When a gallstone travels out of the gallbladder, it can get lodged in one of the narrow bile ducts that connect the gallbladder to the rest of the digestive system. This can block the flow of bile in and out of the gallbladder, causing a painful inflammation attack, or **cholecystitis**.

Gallbladder attacks are most commonly triggered by caffeine, chocolate, eggs, dairy products, and greasy or deep fried foods.

Cholecystitis symptoms can include:

- **Pain on the right side of the abdomen.**
- Pain on the right side of the shoulder, occurring by itself or together with abdominal pain.
- **Upper abdominal pain over the breastbone.**
- Tightness and swelling in the abdominal region.
- **Pain and tenderness under the ribs on the right side, sometimes with a fever.**
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyeballs).
- **Pain that gets worse with coughing.**
- Nausea
- **A sensation of fullness.**
- Pain that is triggered by eating fatty foods.
- **Belching**
- Heartburn
- **Flatulence**
- Vomiting

The pain can be constant, progressing slowly to a high point, where it remains before gradually decreasing. Pain can often occur within several hours after eating a high-fat or fried meal.

During **acute cholecystitis**, symptoms worsen and the gallbladder becomes irritated and infected. There is extreme abdominal pain, too severe to even touch the abdomen. **Chronic**

cholecystitis can develop if the attacks repeat often. Seek medical attention immediately under any type of cholecystitis.

Chapter 8

What Can Really Happen If They Remove Your Gallbladder

… 5 Things Most Doctors Won't Tell You About Gallbladder Surgery:

1. **It's riskier than most people believe.**
2. Doctors admit this surgery is not as safe as it should be.
3. **The possible surgical complications are chronic and untreatable.**
4. It's very easy for something to go wrong…and very hard to fix it once it does.
5. **It's common to switch surgeons at the last minute (and you probably allowed it by signing the consent forms).**

1. It's riskier than most people believe

Surgeries kill thousands of people every year. That's just the reality. No matter how advanced the technology is or how much experience the surgeon has, every type of surgery has potential risks and long-term complications.

It's up to you to decide how much risk you are willing to take. No one should pressure you into having a surgery you don't really need.

You need to be fully informed of all the possible negative consequences of a procedure before you decide to go under the knife.

The question is…

…Will doctors and hospitals give you a completely honest, unbiased opinion?

Before you answer, remember that medicine is a multi-billion dollar business. A lot of entities make tons of money off of expensive drugs and surgeries: hospitals, doctors, insurance companies, medical equipment manufacturers…just to name a few.

There is just too much at stake for them to disclose all the possible consequences—if they did, you might think twice about having the surgery, costing them a lot of money.

2. Doctors admit this surgery is not as safe as it should be

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy (the most common type of gallbladder-removal surgery) is not as safe as most patients are led to believe. While this might surprise you, what might surprise you even more is that…it's the surgeons themselves that are saying this!

Some of America's top surgeons have confessed that the injury and death rates for this surgery are far higher than most patients are ever told about. They didn't say this to their patients, of course.

Cholecystectomy rates increased 22% after the surgery was introduced nearly 20 years ago. Part of the reason for this sharp increase is lower clinical thresholds for performing cholecystectomy. In short, doctors may be rushing hastily to perform this surgery without all the necessary diagnostic evaluations.

These disturbing findings appeared only in scholarly medical journals—publications not widely distributed among the general public.

Think about it…when was the last time you picked up a copy of JAMA (The Journal of the American Medical Association)…The Lancet…The New England Journal of Medicine—or any other renowned medical journal, for that matter—at your local supermarket shelf?

These informative publications are where the world's top doctors, scientists, and researchers publish their latest breakthrough medical findings. Too often, the general public gets left in the dark about these beneficial discoveries.

What's more, don't count on your doctor to give you the inside scoop on the latest discoveries from the medical journals he or she reads…or should be reading.

Far too many doctors are content to simply hand their patients colorful brochures that are often no more than advertisements for the surgeries and procedures they talk about.

And far too many patients are content to accept this with no further questions or investigation on their own.

3. The possible surgical complications are chronic and untreatable

According to top doctors and to real-life cholecystectomy patients, here are some of the possible complications resulting from this surgery. Most of them are chronic, untreatable infections that eventually result in death:

- **Permanent damage to the liver, heart, spleen, kidneys, and joints.**
- **Scarring of the liver and peritoneum tissue (cirrhosis)—**An extremely severe degeneration. Additional surgery may be required to remove the scarring—with no guarantee that the right scar tissue will be removed.
- **Septic complications**
- **Bile leaks into your pelvic region**—And in some cases, into the rest of your body. You'll need immediate surgery to wash the bile out and fix the leak—most hospitals may not be equipped to handle these complications.
  A bile leak can cause pockets of liquid-filled fungus to form throughout your body. A burst fungus can lead to death.
- **Gallbladder inflammation-like symptoms**—Recurring pain in the area where your gallbladder once was, radiating around to the right shoulder and back…precisely the same pain many people felt when they still had their gallbladder.
- **Intercostal neuropathy**—Inflammation of the tissues between the rib bones. You might need to be injected with painful nerve blocks for many months or years to come.

4. It's very easy for something to go wrong…and very hard to fix it once it does

Many of these possible complications can start with just one careless swipe of your surgeon's scalpel. The result: an injury to a vital organ or tissue that can quickly escalate into life-threatening infection and decay throughout your entire body if not handled correctly—by the right person, with the proper equipment, and within a critically short time period.

Don't assume this will happen, though.

With the deep budget cuts, critical shortage of qualified personnel, and bottom-line, cut-throat insurance policies rampant in today's health care system, you are not guaranteed proper—or even competent—medical care when you are lying helpless and unconscious on the operating room table.

Bile duct injuries

Bile duct injuries are common mishaps during cholecystectomy. Cutting or even just nicking your bile duct while trying to remove the gallbladder is an extremely serious complication that is almost impossible to repair correctly. And it happens much more often than most doctors and hospitals like to admit, experts say.

To make matters worse, most hospitals are not properly equipped or staffed with the specialists qualified to permanently repair bile duct injuries. Without the proper equipment and expertise, the surgeons performing the operation often resort to a "quickie patch"—improperly closing the injury using a piece cut from your bowel.

Once the surgery is done, most patients are simply dispatched home, not really aware of the dangerous "repair" they are walking around with. Some fortunate patients are referred to a biliary specialist who can attempt to correct the improper procedure. But this does not happen as often as it should, many experts admit. As a result, irreversible infection can spread to the liver and to other organs, eventually leading to an early, painful death.

5. It's common to switch surgeons at the last minute (and you probably allowed it by signing the consent forms)

Before the surgery, you will be asked to sign a series of very complex consent forms, basically saying that you allow doctors to perform the surgery and that you are fully aware of all the risks involved. But will you really understand everything you are signing? Most people, even many medical professionals themselves, find it hard to completely grasp these hard-to-read, jargon-filled texts.

Experts advise you to make every effort to fully understand all the consent forms you sign. Have them explained to you in simple, everyday language. If possible, hire a lawyer to read and explain them to you. The point is, know exactly what you are signing, which rights you have, and which rights you are giving away.

Did you know, for example, that many consent forms permit a resident (trainee) physician to be substituted in place of the surgeon you have already chosen from your health plan list—even once you are lying unconscious and unaware on the operating table?

If even the most experienced doctors make mistakes, how can you trust the nervous hands of a raw trainee slicing deep into your abdomen…for all you know, you might well be his or her first patient!

Unfortunately, similar last-minute switches happen more often than you probably care to imagine—and you allow them to do this, as well as other things you may find troubling, when you sign many of the standard consent forms used in today's hospitals.

Start Asking Questions Before It's Too Late

If you are thinking of laparoscopic cholecystectomy, or any other surgery, for that matter, it's time to start asking your doctor some serious questions about the real dangers you will be exposed to. But, most of all, you need to start doing your own research.

A careful doctor should not rush to prescribe surgery after the first sign of gallstones or gallbladder trouble. In fact, fewer than 2 percent of all people who have gallstones require surgery, according to most experts.

Many doctors prefer to do several types of tests, including X-rays, ultrasounds, endoscopic explorations, and HIDA scans, before considering the possibility of surgery. Whatever the case, follow up with your doctor and don't be afraid to seek a second opinion.

Find out everything you can about the procedure—the benefits as well as all the possible complications. You want to be realistically prepared for the worst-case scenario. If, after doing this, you still want to go ahead with the surgery, at least you'll know exactly what you are getting into…

…But, don't you want to get better naturally, and not go through the pain, stress, and life-threatening risk of surgery?

Not to mention the embarrassment of having to go through surgery—you lying on the operating table, unconscious, helpless, vulnerable…exposed. Doctors are human…Just what are they saying about you when you are totally knocked out under anesthesia?

At minimum, insist your spouse be there. You will sure need someone on your side, someone to defend you and stand up for your interests when you cannot.

Please don't go through the horrible experience of surgery without at least learning about safe, natural options.

Chapter 9

Gallstone Treatment and Prevention—General Guidelines

It is becoming obvious to an increasing number of health experts that the key to eliminating gallstones forever is to stop them before they become a threat. To not merely deal with the ones you already have, but to make certain that new ones will not appear again.

Prevention is the key. There are certain factors that put you at higher risk of developing gallstones. While some, like stress, can be managed, others, like heredity, are beyond your control. Whatever the case may be, your goal should be to reduce as many of your risk factors as possible.

Here are some overall guidelines for treating your gallstones and reducing or eliminating most gallbladder problems. Other sections of this book go into more detail about the main treatment options outlined here.

Diet

Avoid foods that are linked to gallstone formation:

- pork
- poultry
- eggs
- milk
- onions
- citrus
- corn
- legumes
- nuts

Vegetarian Diet: A British study found that people who followed a vegetarian regimen had fewer gallstones than non-vegetarians.

Eat less animal fat and cholesterol—especially fat from meats and dairy products, says Melvyn R. Werbach, M.D., professor at UCLA School of Medicine. Include more fiber, especially from whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, Dr. Werbach advises.

Fish: Research has shown that people without gallstones tend to eat more fish than people who have gallstones. Fish oil appears to be the main factor that reduces gallstone risk. Good choices are salmon and mackerel.

Coffee: Makes gallbladder contractions stronger, which in some cases may help push out stones lodged in the bile duct. Decaffeinated coffee works as well as regular coffee.

Water: Maintains a healthy proportion of liquid in the bile, which helps keep cholesterol dissolved. Drink at least **eight to ten 8-oz. glasses a day**, recommends Dr. Joseph Pizzorno Jr., N.D.

Supplements

Vitamins C & E: Not enough can lead to gallstones, experts believe. 2,000 milligrams of Vitamin C and 300 IU of Vitamin E a day are recommended.

Calcium: Low levels can increase gallstone risk. Take supplements if you don't eat foods rich in calcium, like dairy products. 1,000 milligrams a day are sufficient to ward off gallstones, many doctors agree.

Fish oil supplements: A Johns Hopkins University study found they prevented gallstones in animals. About 14 grams (almost ½ ounce) a day are ideal.

Lecithin: A fatty acid that helps keep cholesterol dissolved in bile. Take 500 milligrams a day.

Lifestyle Considerations

Chemical Stress

The liver needs to operate at optimum efficiency to produce clean, unsaturated bile. Excess artificial chemicals can burden the liver, which in turn interferes with proper bile formation.

Solvents, paints, hair and deodorant sprays, synthetic air fresheners, and nail polish, as well as artificial colors, preservatives, and flavors in foods all put undue stress on the liver. Eliminate these when possible or substitute them with more natural alternatives.

Exercise

Exercise stimulates bile flow from the liver and has a positive effect on your overall physical and emotional health, as well as on your stress levels. Try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise 5 times a week.

Emotional Stress

Bile flow can slow down or even cease altogether when we get angry, fearful, excited, or worried. Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, stretching, and meditation to keep your emotions in check. And don't forget to always get the proper amount of rest and sleep.

What's one of the best way to deal with stress? Many experts believe it is to avoid stress in the first place. To maintain balance, emotional equilibrium, no matter what stressful event happens.

To learn how to do this, you need to get to the real underlying issues, which will be different for each person. You need to learn what situations cause you stress and what you can do ahead of time.

Ask yourself: What are the real causes of my stress? Then think how you can resolve those causes so they no longer bring you stress.

Herbal Medicine

Mint: Mint family herbs, like peppermint and spearmint, are traditional gallbladder remedies. Rowachol, a popular over-the-counter British gallstone medication, is formulated with menthol, the active compound in peppermint oil. Up to 73% of people who took Rowachol together with a stone-dissolving prescription drug had their gallstones dissolved. Rowachol may be hard to find in the United States, however.

Peppermint oil capsules: May have stone-dissolving effects, according to Dr. Werbach. Take 1 or 2 capsules (1.2 milliliters each) 3 times a day with food.

Turmeric: A traditional Indian spice. Contains curcumin, a compound that keeps cholesterol in bile dissolved, as researched by Commission E, a well-respected German government agency that evaluates herbal remedies. Tablets are more potent than the actual herb. Take 300-600 milligrams 3 times a day.

Milk thistle: Sylmarin, the medicinal compound in milk thistle, has proven to reduce cholesterol in bile. Get your doctor's advice before taking milk thistle, especially if you have liver problems.

Medical Options

Homeopathy: Some homeopathic medicines have been effective in treating gallstones, says homeopath Dana Ullman. These include: Aconitum napellus, Belladona, Berberis, Chelidonium, Magnesia phophorica, Nux vomica, and Podophyllum.

Ayurvedic Medicine: Traditional Indian herbal medicine. For gallstones, uses liver-cleansing herbs that also act as laxatives: aloe, rhubarb root, senna, cascara sagrada, according to David Frawley, O.M.D. Then the stones are eliminated with Ayurvedic herbs: pashana bheda, gokshura, katuka, says Dr. Frawley.

Gallstone-Dissolving Drugs: Gallstone-dissolving drugs include chenodeoxycholic acid, ursodeoxycholic acid, methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE) and ethyl propionate.

These drugs work mostly on small stones by increasing the bile acid, which slowly dissolves cholesterol gallstones. Unpleasant side effects are common, including diarrhea, nausea, pain or fever, hepatic injury and increased cholesterol levels.

The cost of the drugs can be extremely expensive. They have a high failure rate (up to 50%), and when they do dissolve the gallstones the recurrence rate can be as high as 50%.

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL): Medical alternative to surgery. Only about 15% of all patients qualify for this treatment, which has some serious risks.

During ESWL, patients sit in a water bath while high-energy, ultrasound shock waves are targeted through the abdomen toward the stones. Smaller stones (less than 2 cm in diameter) may shatter into fragments and eventually get washed out by bile.

However, there is a risk that some of the fragments could remain in the bile ducts, providing a nest for bacteria. Other ESWL complications include gallbladder pain, pancreatitis, raised blood pressure and permanent damage to the kidneys.

Gallbladder-removal surgery: Usually for only the most severe conditions, after other alternative treatments have been tried and failed. Gallstones reappear in 15% of patients who undergo gallbladder removal surgery, because the liver still produces bile.

Chapter 10

Other Gallbladder Relief Tips

LOWER YOUR TRIGLYCERIDES

The key to lowering bile cholesterol is to lower your triglyceride levels, many experts believe. Triglycerides are fats that are formed by the liver to store energy derived from the refined sugars and fructose found as ingredients in many processed, ready-to-eat, and fast foods, such as ice cream, frozen dinners, canned food, desserts, fast foods, chips, and cookies.

Like cholesterol, triglycerides are difficult to dissolve in bile. They need carriers—such as bile salts and phospholipids—to bind to them so they can be transported by the bile through the gallbladder and across the various bile ducts.

The problem is, triglycerides take over many of the same carriers that the cholesterol molecules rely on. Since cholesterol is slightly harder to dissolve, it gets left behind, turning into sludge and potentially into gallstones.

Reducing your triglyceride levels is essential to prevent gallstones from forming. Avoid a high-sugar diet and get enough exercise to burn the excess triglycerides formed by the liver. This will keep your bile's cholesterol-dissolving capacity at peak levels.

ALLEVIATE CONDITIONS RELATED TO GALLBLADDER DISEASE

Improving one part of your digestion can have a positive effect on the rest of the digestive organs. Relieving the following conditions can benefit your gallbladder's well-being:

1. Colic

Spasmodic bouts of cramping pain, especially in the bowel. Often associated with trapped gas. Can be tension-related or linked to other digestive disturbances, in which case those problems might have to be addressed. Some colic treatments include:

Naturopathy—Externally, a hot water bottle placed over the lower abdomen will give relief. Internally, herbal teas (as detailed below) not only reduce the spasms but also aid digestion.

Herbal treatment—For occasional attacks, use hot teas made from the following herbs:

Catmint (*Nepeta cataria*)
Chamomile (*Chamomilla recutita*)
Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
Ginger (*Zingiber officinalis*)
Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*).

Adding these seeds to food or simply chewing a few after a meal can help with mild colic after eating:

Aniseed (*Pimpinella anisum*)
Caraway (*Carum carvi*)?
Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)
Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)

Frequent colic bouts might result from eating in a hurry, gulping down large amounts of food too quickly, and including too many fatty, spicy foods or dairy products in your diet. Simply eating in a more relaxed manner would probably be a good idea for alleviating colic attacks.

For more severe, frequent colic attacks, seek medical attention.

2. Flatulence

Gas accumulating in the stomach especially after eating wind-producing foods. If it happens often, could be a sign of diverticulosis or irritable bowel syndrome.

3. Constipation

The slow passage of feces. Associated with the typical Western eating and lifestyle habits: high-fat, low-fiber diet and lack of sufficient exercise.

When feces passes slowly through the bowel, it causes water to be reabsorbed, resulting in hardened stools that are hard to excrete. Straining to pass these hard stools can cause hemorrhoids. Some natural constipation remedies include:

> **Herbalism**—Gentle laxatives like Dandelion Root (*Taraxacum officinale*) can help, particularly taken as a decoction. Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) is also beneficial—as a herb, it can be added to the Dandelion Root decoction or it can also be purchased in chewable stick form.

Chapter 11

Healing Your Gallbladder with a Healthy Diet

A proper, carefully chosen diet ranks among the best ways to heal your gallbladder without surgery, many health experts agree. You can start enjoying a healthier liver and gallbladder by removing foods that cause you pain and adding foods that help you start healing your body.

Here are some basic diet guidelines that can lower your chances of suffering a gallbladder attack or of having to undergo a painful and risky surgery:

- **Diet slowly**—Crash diets, in which you lose a lot of weight only to gain it back quickly, increase your chances of forming gallstones. A safe way to diet is to **lose only 1 or 2 pounds** per week and change your eating habits so the pounds stay off.

- **Cut down on fat**—About 20 percent of the calories in the typical "Western" diet come from fat and cholesterol. Experts agree that lowering this number will reduce your risk of gallstones.

  Don't cut out too much fat, however. Studies show that almost half of the people who drastically reduce their fat intake to lose weight end up developing new gallstones. **Consuming fewer than 600 calories or under 3 grams of fat a day could put you at risk for gallstones**.

- **Eat friendly fats**— "Researchers suspect that Omega-3 fatty acids, like those found in fish, can help prevent gallstones," says Lawrence Bronstein, D.C. of Massachusetts.

  Omega-3 fatty acids can prevent gallstones by reducing the presence of cholesterol in bile.

  Some of the richest sources of Omega-3 fatty acids are: **fish oil supplements, cold water fish (such as salmon), and hemp, walnut, and flax seed oil.** The best quality oils are labeled organic, extra virgin, and unrefined.

Healthy, unrefined fats and oils are also easier on the liver. This is especially important because a poorly-functioning liver has trouble digesting fats. Try reducing most of the fat from your diet until your liver and gallbladder recuperate. Afterwards, start consuming healthier fats and oils.

- **Eliminate saturated fats**—Avoid bad fats like hydrogenated and trans-fats (common in processed and deep-fried foods), which increase the risk of gallstones. Stay away from most fast foods, especially the ones which are deep fried.

- **Consume more dietary fiber**—Dietary fiber helps keep your bile cholesterol at a desirable level. While cholesterol may be an essential body ingredient, too much of it can lead to gallstone formation.

  Soluble dietary fiber binds to cholesterol molecules, helping them to be excreted in your feces instead of getting reabsorbed into the bloodstream as they pass through the intestines.

- **Drink more fluids, especially water**—Mayo Clinic patients, for example, are routinely put on fluid-heavy diets. Over half of the patients who increased their fluid intake over a five-year period had no signs of new gallstones, the clinic reports.

  Drink 6-8 glasses of pure water a day to maintain the water content of your bile. Avoid ice-cold water (as well as other foods and drinks)—room temperature or warmer is best.

- **Consume olive oil**—Drink a little unrefined, cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil every day. Olive oil helps the gallbladder contract to clear away stagnant bile.

- **Eat small, regular meals**—Eating 4 or 5 small meals a day is easier on the gallbladder than eating 3 large ones. The frequent presence of food also stimulates the gallbladder to contract and empty out its bile before it settles and leaves more gallstone-producing cholesterol deposits in the gallbladder.

- **Eat moderately**—Avoid large meals. Overeating puts a heavy burden on your gallbladder, as well as on other digestive organs, such as your liver and stomach. **Never skip meals**, however, especially breakfast.

- **Help your digestion**—Proper digestion boosts gallbladder function, making gallstones less likely. Supplemental bile salts are known to improve digestion, as are general digestive enzyme supplements, including: **protease, amylase, lipase, cellulase, and maltase.**

- **Start eating more vegetable proteins (especially soy products), cut back on animal proteins**—Up to 80% of each meal should be made up of vegetables. Most vegetables are alkaline, which helps bile neutralize stomach acids. They are also rich sources of vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

- **Buy fresh, organic produce**—Consume a good quantity of fresh, organic fruits and vegetables, particularly those containing **pectin** (such as green apples) and **cellulose** (such as celery and crisp fruits and vegetables).

- **Eat whole grains and unrefined carbohydrates—** Eliminate all products made with white sugar and white flour. Whole grain brown bread, brown rice and pasta, as well as grain-like seeds are nourishing sources of plant proteins, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Mix seeds into just about any food, including salads, breakfast cereals, shakes, and main dishes.

  Plant proteins are also easier to digest than animal proteins. In fact, research indicates that vegetarians have a much lower incidence of gallstones.

- **Cleanse with fermented foods and drinks**—Foods such as cultured vegetables and young coconut kefir cleanse the liver and gallbladder. They contain immune-boosting microflora and probiotics that strengthen all the digestive organs.

Chapter 12

Foods That Are Good for Your Gallbladder

The following is a list of the foods most often used to help the gallbladder heal. This doesn't mean you shouldn't eat other foods or that every one of these foods will help you. It's all a matter of testing what's right for you.

- **Beets**
- **Cucumbers**
- **Green beans**
- **Okra**
- **Sweet potatoes**
- **Avocados**—A great source of healthy fats.
- **Vinegar**—Especially apple cider vinegar. Vinegar helps neutralize digestive acids.
- **Whole Garlic and Onions**—Help with liver cleansing.
- **Shallots**
- **Ripe Tomatoes**
- **Cold water fish**—Such as salmon, sardines, tuna, rainbow trout, anchovies, and herring.
- **Lemons**—A glass of fresh lemon juice with warm water first thing in the morning helps to cleanse the liver.
- **Grapes and fresh organic grape juice**
- **Apples, Berries, Papaya, Pears**
- **Omega 3 oils like flax or hemp**—Blend them with fresh lemon juice or vinegar on salads. Do not cook with flax oil, since heat destroys its beneficial properties.
- **Vegetable juices**—Beet and cucumber juice help boost the gallbladder's health. Many people blend them together and add green vegetables such as baby greens, swiss chard, dandelion greens, beet greens, celery, and carrots.
- **Organic grape juice and organic apple juice**—Fresh, homemade juice is best.
- **Baby mixed organic greens for salads**.

Chapter 13

Gallbladder Diet—Frequently Asked Questions

Which types of fats should I avoid?

The type of dietary fat you consume can influence bile **lithogenicity** (the ability of bile to form gallstones) and cholesterol gallstone formation. A 14-year study of over 45,000 people found that the risk of gallstone disease was highest in those individuals that consumed high amounts of trans-fatty acids in their diet.

The study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, concluded that **trans-fatty acids**, such as those found in margarine, shortening, and fried foods, may increase blood lipid levels. This can lead to hypersecretion of cholesterol into the biliary tree (bile ducts and organs), one of the main risk factors of gallstone formation.

Trans-fatty acids are formed during the process of partial hydrogenation, when liquid vegetable oils are converted to margarine and shortening. Trans-fatty acids are structurally similar to saturated fats in meats—and could have similar adverse effects, such as increases in plasma triglyceride levels and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) and decreases in plasma high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C), all of which lead to a greater chance of forming gallstones. In fact, research has shown that trans-fatty acids could decrease HDL-C twice as much as saturated fats.

The kind of fat you use for baking and frying food and at the table, can have a large influence on your gallbladder health. A stick of margarine, for example, has about twice as much trans-fatty acid as tub margarine.

Overall, the composition of your diet, not your total energy intake (calories), is the most relevant factor to dietary recommendations. For example, the study found that people who consumed higher amounts of trans-fatty acids tended to consume fewer carbohydrates, proteins, and fibers, and more coffee, polyunsaturated fat, monounsaturated fat, and saturated fat. In addition, they also led more sedentary lifestyles.

Is my doctor the best person to advise me about nutrition?

Most medical schools only include about 12 hours of nutritional courses in their entire five-year curriculum. For this reason, many doctors are not experts in nutrition.

Nutrition focuses on preventing diseases. The majority of medical doctors, on the other hand, are trained to treat the symptoms once you have a disease, not help you prevent the disease.

The average doctor, unfortunately, is more at home cutting an organ or prescribing a drug than outlining a healthy nutritional plan for you. Work closely with your doctor to treat your disease, but consider seeking the help of a nutritional specialist to complement your doctor's treatment.

Is it a good idea to skip breakfast?

Definitely not—breakfast is critical in preventing gallstones. Going many hours without food causes bile to accumulate in the gallbladder, increasing the chances of gallstones developing. Food stimulates the gallbladder to empty itself of this stagnant bile.

A ten-year study of 4,730 women found that gallstone incidence was highest in women who skipped breakfast regularly and who, as a result, went without solid food for at least 14 hours. Women who fasted less than 8 hours before their breakfast had the fewest diagnosed cases of gallstones.

Food stimulates the gallbladder to contract and release bile acids, which help keep cholesterol molecules dissolved and unable to form gallstones, according to Dr. James Everhart, M.D., a scientist at the National Institute of Digestive and Kidney Diseases, which conducted the study.

Are only obese people at risk for gallstones?

Not really. In a Harvard study, women who were only 10 pounds overweight were found to have nearly double the chances of developing gallstones. Overall, obese women were about six times as prone to gallstones as women of normal weight.

Scientists think that excessive fat in the body causes the liver to produce more cholesterol, which is then secreted into the bile. Cholesterol-saturated bile can lead to the formation of gallstones. High triglyceride levels and low HDL cholesterol levels can also increase the risk of gallstones.

Do I need to lose weight quickly if I am overweight?

Actually, losing weight slowly is better. While burning off excess fat reduces the chances of gallstones, losing it too quickly can actually have the opposite effect. Many experts think it's unsafe to lose more than two pounds a week.

Several studies show that if you go on a low-fat, low-calorie rapid weight loss diet (under 600 calories and less than 3 grams of fat a day), you have up to a **50 percent** chance of developing gallstones. The more pounds you need to lose, the higher your risk.

According to Dr. C. Wayne Callaway of George Washington University, dieters who get off drastic weight-loss diets often experience gallstone symptoms for the first time as soon as they resume eating normally.

To offset the effects of the diet, include at least **10g of fat** in each meal to help the gallbladder contract regularly.

One way to include fat is to add a couple of teaspoons of olive oil to your diet each day, advises Dr. Steven Heymsfield, M.D., of the Obesity Research Center at St. Lukes-Roosevelt Hospital in New York. This stimulates your gallbladder to contract, thus preventing bile from building up and potentially forming gallstones, Dr. Heymsfield adds.

Chapter 14

The 12 Nutrients That Keep Your Liver and Gallbladder Strong

These nutrients will help keep your liver and gallbladder functioning at optimal levels. Normal liver operation is critical to treating gallstones and gallbladder disorders. Among other things, a healthy liver will produce cleaner, cholesterol-light bile that can sweep away biliary sludge and potential gallstones from the gallbladder tissues and ducts.

LECITHIN AND CHOLINE

Research shows that **lecithin** (or its purified extract, phosphatidylcholine) and **choline** are two of the best liver function boosters.

Lecithin is a key bile component that helps keep cholesterol dissolved. It works by helping to emulsify (or blend) fats—such as cholesterol—with water. Lecithin is found in many animal- and plant-based foods, including liver, eggs, soybeans, peanuts, and wheat germ.

Lecithin and choline also play a role in preventing liver scarring, hepatitis and cirrhosis, as well as helping the liver filter dangerous toxins from the blood.

In addition, these two essential components are also vital to a wide range of other bodily functions:

- **They help build cell membranes and facilitate the movement of fats and nutrients in and out of cells.**
- They aid in fetal and infant development.
- **Choline plays a key role in the function of acetylcholine, a brain chemical which affects memory and muscle control.**
- Lecithin is a fatty nutrient critical to nearly every cell in your body, particularly the nerve cells.

Suggested Lecithin Dosages

Two 1,200 milligram capsules twice a day.
In granular form: 2 teaspoons a day.

CHOLINE

Choline is an important B vitamin that derives from lecithin. Besides dietary and supplemental lecithin, other great sources of choline are: **liver, soybeans, egg yolks, grape juice, peanuts, cabbage, and cauliflower.** You can also buy choline supplements as well as finding choline included as an ingredient in B-complex vitamins.

Choline is also a common ingredient in **lipotropic combinations**. These are liver-strengthening supplements that can protect against fat buildup in the liver and improve the flow of fats and cholesterol through the liver and gallbladder.

Lipotropic combinations may also contain **methionine** (an amino acid), **inositol** (a B vitamin), and the herbs **milk thistle** and **dandelion**—all of which complement choline's liver-boosting effects.

Lack of choline can show effects quickly. A study of healthy adult men found that after just 30 days of consuming a choline-deficient diet, most men had elevated liver enzymes, a sign of liver problems.

Suggested Choline Dosages

550 milligrams a day for men.
425 milligrams a day for women.

Note: Avoid taking more than 10 grams of choline a day, which may result in fishy body odor or heart rhythm disorders.

FLAXSEED OIL

Flaxseed oil is one of the richest sources of **Essential fatty acids (EFAs),** important fats and oils the body must get from foods and supplements, since it does not produce them on its own.

EFAs are important building blocks of the outer membranes of cells throughout the body. Cell membranes act as gatekeepers for cells, letting in beneficial nutrients and keeping out harmful substances. Weak cell membranes can lead to poor nutrition absorption and harmful accumulation of toxins.

Over 50% of the essential fatty acids in flaxseed oil are **Omega-3 LNA** (Alpha linoleic acid), which can help you maintain a healthy, gallstone-free gallbladder by helping to lower high triglycerides, ease tissue inflammation, and boost your metabolic rate.

LNAs help our body make other necessary fatty acids. Yet our body cannot manufacture its own LNA—it depends on our diet to supply it. The problem is, most of us don't get enough Omega-3 LNA in our diets, according to many experts.

Flaxseed oil can easily make up for that deficiency. A mere teaspoon of flaxseed oil contains about 2.5 grams of Omega-3 fatty acids, twice as much as the amount found in the average American diet.

Combine Omega-3 with Omega-6

Omega-3 LNA works best when combined with another important fatty acid, O**mega-6 LA** (Linoleic acid). Research has found that our body needs twice the amount of Omega-6 LA as the amount of Omega-3 LNA. Yet studies estimate that most of us get from 10 to 50 times more Omega-6 LA than Omega-3 LNA in our diets.

Flaxseed oil can quickly narrow that gap, since it contains **4 times** as much Omega-3 LNA as Omega-6 LA. By including flaxseed oil in your diet, you can help to balance your LNA and LA fatty acid ratio to a healthier level.

Other Flaxseed Benefits

Flaxseeds have antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties, useful for keeping bile free of infections, and therefore, less likely to leave behind gallstone-causing deposits.

Flaxseed oil also enhances your body's ability to absorb food, insuring you get the most nutrition from what you eat and drink, essential for healthy, gallstone-free digestion.

Crushed flaxseeds can also be effective for persistent constipation. They add bulk to stools by absorbing liquid, which creates soft stools that are easier for the peristaltic muscles of the digestive tract to propel through the bowel. In addition, flaxseed oil lubricates the stools for easier passage through the colon.

Scientific evidence also confirms that flaxseed's properties shield your body from cancer, heart disease, and cataracts, as well as promoting healthy skin, hair, and nails.

Flaxseeds are also rich in **lignans**, substances that help various hormones to fight cancer, bacteria, viruses, and fungi. In fact, flaxseeds boast up to 800 times the lignan content in most other foods.

How to Include Flaxseed in Your Diet

You can add flaxseed oil to cooked foods, salads, cereals, and soups for a nutlike, buttery flavor. Don't cook with it, however, since heat destroys its nutrients.

Quick and Easy Flaxseed Blend: Blend 1 cup of cottage cheese or yogurt with 2-4 tablespoons of flaxseed oil and 1-2 tablespoons of ground flaxseed. Add water to soften the blend.

Nutritious Flaxseed Breakfast Mix: Add flaxseed to hot grain cereal for breakfast. Cook the cereal following the directions on the package. As the cereal cools, add 2 tablespoons of ground flax seed. It also tastes great if you add cinnamon, honey, or raisins to the mix.

Keep flaxseed oil refrigerated for optimum freshness. Direct light can spoil flaxseed oil, so buy oil that is packaged in light-filtering opaque bottles. A strong or pungent odor is a sign that the oil has turned rancid.

Suggested Dosages

Liquid flaxseed oil is the most powerful form. Take 1 tablespoon a day with food. Or mix into juice, yogurt, or cottage cheese.

For **flaxseed fiber**, mix 1 or 2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds with a glass of water and drink it up to three times a day.

PSYLLIUM

The product of the **common plantain herb (plantago psyllium),** these tiny, fiber-rich seeds have been prescribed for digestive ailments—including gallstones—for over 500 years. Psyllium seeds, which are reddish-black in color, are generally dried, ground, and sold in powder, capsule, or chewable tablet form.

It has been demonstrated that psyllium-supplemented diets enhance the total bile acid pool and stimulate hepatic bile acid synthesis, two actions which suppress gallstone formation.

Psyllium helps keep cholesterol dissolved by binding to the cholesterol compounds in the bile. This can help offset the gallstone-causing effects of a rapid weight-loss diet, according to a Mexican study of obese patients who where put on extremely low-calorie regimens.

Psyllium can be an inexpensive source of soluble (water-dissolving) fiber, especially if you don't eat enough fiber-rich foods, such as whole grains (oats are particularly high in soluble fiber), beans, fruits, and vegetables.

Suggested Dosage

How do you take psyllium? The usual dosage is 1 to 3 tablespoons (or up to 10 grams) two or three times a day. Some formulas are more concentrated, so follow the directions on the label. Don't exceed 30 grams a day.

Guidelines for use: Dissolve psyllium powder in water (or juice), drink it, and then drink another glass of water or juice. Additionally, drink six to eight glasses of water a day. Take psyllium at least two hours after taking medications or other supplements so it doesn't interfere with their absorption. Ask your doctor before using psyllium.

Cautions: Increase your psyllium intake slowly over several days, to avoid bloating and increased flatulence. Excessive psyllium doses may reduce absorption of certain minerals. If you have trouble swallowing or breathing, seek medical help.

Psyllium Husks

The fibrous husks of the psyllium seeds help normalize bowel movements by absorbing excess water from the intestines, which lends bulk to stools, making them softer and easier to pass. This can help relieve constipation, diarrhea, diverticulosis, hemorrhoids, and irritable bowel syndrome.

Psyllium husks can complement liver and gallbladder flushes. Whole psyllium husks relax the smooth muscles in the bile ducts and intestines and absorb toxins, easing the way for gallstones to exit your body.

LIPOTROPIC COMBINATIONS

Lipotropic (or "fat-burning") combinations are ready-made formulas that commonly include **milk thistle, choline, inositol,** and **methionine**. Lipotropic mixtures bolster liver function and promote the healthy flow of fats and bile from the liver and gallbladder. Here's what each of the lipotropic components do:

Milk thistle: Herb that alters bile composition, helping dissolve and eliminate stones.

Choline and inositol: B-vitamin derivatives that help metabolize fat and cholesterol. They boost the function of lecithin, a fatty bile component that needs to be present in sufficient amounts in order to prevent gallstones.

Methionine: An amino acid that improves liver and gallbladder function. It may raise levels of taurine, an amino acid which improves bile flow and helps dissolve gallstones.

Healthy Tip: Combine lipotropic combinations with Vitamin C for greater gallstone-fighting potency. Vitamin C can lower your bile cholesterol levels, significantly reducing the chances that cholesterol-laden bile will clump to form stones.

HONEY

Honey is not only a food by itself, but serves as a food supplement that helps your body digest other foods. Here are some of honey's beneficial properties:

Makes digestion smoother—Honey prevents fermentation in the gastrointestinal tract, making digestion easier and preventing complications that could lead to liver and gallbladder malfunction, among other results.

Helps the liver perform at peak levels—Honey contains elements for forming new blood. A steady stream of clean, rapidly flowing blood quickly and effectively transports nutrients and

takes away waste products from cells and organs. This greatly assists the liver, which constantly needs to dispose of large amounts of waste into the bloodstream so it can perform its other duties (such as bile formation), at optimal levels.

Functions as a sedative, for sound and refreshing sleep—Proper rest is critical for your body to recuperate and rebuild its reserves of energy. Tired, overstressed systems are more prone to disease and to function ineffectively. A faltering liver, for example, can produce oversaturated bile that is more likely to form gallstones.

Essential for maintaining the nervous system—Can promote a healthy response to stress, which allows all your organs to function better. Honey is especially suited for building the nervous system in babies forming inside the mother.

Suggested Dosage

2 teaspoons a day, by itself or with food.

B VITAMINS

B Vitamins are good liver detoxifiers and stress reducers. They can help with every kind of stress—emotional, mental, physical, and digestive.

Reducing stress is one of the keys to proper digestion, as well as healthy gallbladder function. Stress can cause the valves and sphincter muscles to tighten up and not function properly. This can lead to biliary dyskinesia (stagnant bile), low functioning gallbladder, and sphincter of Oddi (the ring-shaped muscle that opens and closes the opening that releases food from the stomach) dysfunction.

SUPPLEMENTAL BILE SALTS

The gallbladder pumps out a more concentrated form of bile than the liver. If your gallbladder has been removed or if it is low-functioning, supplemental bile salts can take up the

slack in digesting fats. By helping to break down fats, bile salts can help relieve constipation, and assist in absorbing the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K and essential fatty acids.

Concentrated, purified bile salts are best. They have acids and enzymes which help to stimulate digestion, one of the roots of the problem to begin with.

Recommendation: Get bile salt supplements with ox bile, sodium dehydrocholic acid or deoxycholic acid.

Suggested Ratio (per capsule): 430 mg ox bile, 250 mg of sodium dehydrocholic acid or deoxycholic acid

Dosage: 1 capsule per meal

MULLEIN LEAF

Mullein leaf contains enzymes that aid in protein digestion and cleanse the bowel for better absorption of nutrients in food.

Recommendation: Get supplements that combine mullein leaf with pepsin, pectin, and bromelain.

Suggested Ratio: 250 mg pepsin, 120 mg pectin, 115 mg mullein leaf, 60 mg bromelain.

Dosage: 1 capsule per meal

DIGESTIVE AIDS

Some digestive acids can trigger the production of hydrochloric acid, which helps in protein digestion, as well as aiding the gallbladder to empty its bile fully.

Recommendation: Betane HCL, glutamic acid HCL, pepsin, and ammonium chloride.

Suggested Ratio: 350 mg betane HCL, 195 mg glutamic acid HCL, 125 mg pepsin, 65 mg ammonium chloride.

Dosage: 1 capsule after each meal.

BUCKWHEAT PROTEIN

Animal studies have indicated that a diet high in buckwheat protein can help prevent gallstones. **Buckwheat protein (BWP)** has high nutritional and biological value thanks to its well-balanced amino acid composition. An excellent supplement to cereal grains as well as a great choice as a **flour for making bread**, BWP helps lower cholesterol because of its low digestability. Its fiber-like effects also inhibit intestinal absorption of bile acids and neutral steroids, leading to reduced bile cholesterol.

Some of buckwheat's beneficial effects include:

- **Lowers plasma (HDL) and liver total concentrations of cholesterol.**
- Reduces plasma triglyceride concentration.
- **Lowers proportion of cholesterol in gallbladder bile by increasing bile acids. This reduces the bile's cholesterol saturation, since bile acids and phospholipids dissolve gallbladder cholesterol in bile.**
- Elevates the ratio of **cholic acid (CA)** to **chenodeoxycholic acid (CDCA)** in bile, as well as the ratio of CA to lithocholic acid. This is good because CA stimulates fresh bile production in the liver by helping to get rid of used bile acids in the feces. CDCA and lithocholic acids, on the other hand, may actually reduce synthesis of new bile acid.
- **Helps the intestine get rid of fecal neutral and acidic steroids through the feces. This happens because of BWP binds to these neutral sterols. This cleansing action in turn lowers bile cholesterol.**

Buckwheat protein's cholesterol-lowering activity is similar to that of dietary fiber. In addition, BWP has these other fiber-like effects:

- **Lowers overall body fat.**
- Elevates stool weight and ameliorates atropine-induced constipation.
- **Reduces the toxicity of amaranth, the main component of Food Red No.2, a common food coloring additive.**
- Cuts gastrointestinal transit time of food from the stomach to the anus.

PHOSPHATIDYLCHOLINE

Phosphatidylcholines (PC) are a class of phospholipids that are sometimes called "essential phospholipids." They are essential because the body needs them yet cannot synthesize them on its own. It must get them from the food you eat.

Every cell in your body needs phospholipids to stay alive. Without them, each one of the trillions of cells in your body would instantly disintegrate. Phospholipids are vital components of all human cell membranes.

Phosphatidylcholine has been demonstrated to help prevent or delay gallstones. Since PC is considered the main cholesterol solubilizer in bile, it is critical for the effective removal of cholesterol from bile.

A recent Canadian study suggests that a PC-supplemented diet can lead to significant increases in bile flow (30%), bile acid (70%), and phospholipid (26%) secretion rates, all potential gallstone-reducing actions.

How Phospholipids Work

Phospholipids and bile acids interact to form **biliary lipid micelles**—these are small, gelatin-like particles that float in the bile.

Cholesterol molecules are carried inside the micelles. This keeps the cholesterol molecules in a stable form and away from liquid, two important preventive measures that keep the cholesterol from forming gallstones.

Without adequate PC, fat and cholesterol can accumulate in the liver. This can lead to more cholesterol being secreted into the bile.

In the Canadian study, the mice's bile cholesterol levels were lowered after consuming regular doses of phospholipids. In fact, their **Cholesterol Saturation Index (CSI)**—a measure of the cholesterol in their bile—was noticeably reduced after they were given a diet supplemented with PC derived from soya beans.

Since cholesterol gallstones account for more than 80% of the gallstones in Western countries, taking PC supplements is a great idea to improve the metabolism of cholesterol and/or bile salts. By helping to increase the secretion of bile acids and biliary lipids, phosphatidylcholine can cut your gallstone-forming risk.

GARLIC AND ONION

An Indian study on mice found that garlic and onion reduced the incidence of gallstones by 15% to 39%, heat-processed onions having the greatest effect.

Here are the main gallstone-preventing benefits of garlic and onions consumption, according to the study:

- Reduces biliary cholesterol by up to 54%.
- **Keeps bile dissolved (especially heated garlic).**
- Lowers bile cholesterol saturation (raw and heat-processed onion seem to work best).
- **Decreases serum and liver cholesterol levels.**
- Increases bile acid output.
- **Cuts hyper-secretion of cholesterol into the bile.**

Chapter 15

Olive Oil: A Healthy Choice

Olive oil has been a staple in the diet of many cultures--especially those of Mediterranean countries like Egypt, Spain, Greece, Israel, and Italy--for thousands of years. It has been essential for a variety of uses, including cooking, healing, moisturizing skin, and even as lamp fuel.

Olive oil is rich in vitamin A and vitamin E, important antioxidants which neutralize cancer-causing free radicals in our bodies. It is monounsaturated, which means it lowers the “bad” LDL cholesterol without reducing the “good” HDL cholesterol. This results in improved circulation, lowered blood pressure and less risk for heart disease.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil is Best

Extra virgin olive oil is a better choice than “virgin” or “pure” olive oils. Extra virgin is the oil from the first pressing; it uses top grade olives, with less than one percent acidity, and has the highest nutritional value and the best taste.

Virgin olive oil comes from the second or third pressing. The same olives from the first pressing are reused, as well as other lower-grade olives. You are basically getting the oil leftover in the olives after the first pressing has produced the extra virgin olive oil.

Pure olive oil comes from the third or fourth pressing of the very same olives. By this stage, extreme heat and chemicals must be used to extract whatever oil may be left in the remaining pulp, destroying the oil’s nutrients and the rich, fruity taste.

Uses and Storage

Use olive oil in salads, stir-fries and sautés. Brush it on vegetables, fish, or poultry before grilling. Try it on bread, in place of butter.

Do not deep fry with olive oil, since temperatures over 350 degrees break down the beneficial components of the oil.

Store olive oil in a cool, dark cabinet, not on the counter, or next to a stove, as both heat and light alter the oil's nutritional value.

Chapter 16

The Remarkable Benefits of Moderate Exercise

Regular exercise is essential to maintaining a healthy gallbladder and staying free from gallstones. Exercise helps keep your weight down, improves your blood circulation, and boosts your digestive system.

These are all powerful benefits that ensure your liver produces smooth-flowing bile that can help your body reduce gallstone-related pain as well as eliminate potential gallstones before they cause dangerous complications.

Exercise Can Reduce the Risk of Gallstones

Physical activity has been directly linked to lower rates of gallstone formation, while also improving cholesterol levels, according to a recent University of Illinois study. The study found that mice which were sedentary had two and a half times the amount of gallstones as mice who exercised 45 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

The researchers concluded that exercise appears to trigger a set of genes (LDLr and SRB1) that regulate liver and bile cholesterol metabolism by reducing blood cholesterol levels.

Also, exercise may increase the production of a protein called Cyp27 up to two and a half times. This protein helps produce more bile acids that keep cholesterol solubilized, making it harder for gallstones to form.

The Benefits of Exercise

The following is merely a partial list of some of the many valuable benefits exercise can provide you:

- ✓ **Burns fat, which helps maintain an ideal healthy weight.**
- ✓ Boosts your body's immunity to disease.

- ✓ **Keeps you feeling young—Recent groundbreaking research shows that exercise can slow down the degenerative effects of aging.**
- ✓ Restores the body's neurochemical balance, which affects our emotional state.
- ✓ **Increases confidence. Moving around helps reduce anxiety—exercise acts as a displacement defense mechanism.**
- ✓ Lowers your cholesterol.
- ✓ **Builds up muscles and bones.**
- ✓ Enhances your mental health.
- ✓ **Improves bowel movements, important for keeping cholesterol dissolved in bile.**

Integrating Exercise Into Your Daily Routine

A regular exercise routine can be adapted to just about anyone's schedule. No need for special equipment or facilities, either. Here are some examples of "mini-workouts" you can fit in throughout the day:

- Park at the back of the parking lot so you can walk a few extra steps to the grocery store.
- Clean the house or do yard work for 15 minutes.
- Do 10 minutes of aerobic exercise with a video before work.
- Walk the stairs for 10 minutes during a coffee break.
- Take a brisk stroll around the block with your dog after work.
- Ride your stationary bike for 10 minutes while watching the evening news.

Once you look for opportunities to get a little extra exercise, you'll begin finding them everywhere you look. Pretty soon, all these short spurts of activity will add up to healthier, more invigorating days.

Short Activity Breaks Are Very Effective

More and more companies and schools are instituting short physical activity breaks—so-called "deskercises"—into the daily routines of their workers and students, says Dr. Toni Yancey of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Incorporating short fitness breaks into your day can have big payoffs. Even 10 minutes of moderate exercise 2 or 3 times each day—such as walking, gardening, marching in place—can have noticeable effects on your health, says Dr. Yancey.

Walking 30 minutes a day, for example, burns about 200 calories, enough to comfortably lose around 20 pounds in one year.

The effects can be mental and emotional, as well. The more active you are, the more you gain a hopeful feeling about yourself. As your mind focuses on your exercise routine, it relaxes and gets rid of nervousness and anxiety.

The 6 Rules of Starting an Exercise Program – And Staying With It

According to researchers at the American College of Sport Medicine (ACSM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the "no pain, no gain" theory is out. Exercise doesn't have to be painful or tedious at all to have noticeable, positive effects.

1. **Make it enjoyable**—Brief, low-impact, simple physical activity can be done to music or to any other accompaniment you enjoy.
2. **Keep it short**—Only 20 to 30 minutes a day of moderately intense exercise is all most people need to reap significant benefits.
3. **Choose activities that you like and will enjoy doing on a regular basis.** Ask yourself: What are my goals? Which facet of my overall health do I want to improve? Look over these categories to help you pinpoint which types of exercises will suit you best:

   Range-of-motion or stretching exercises—Would you simply like to be able to touch your toes? Practice exercises that involve extending a joint through its full range of motion, as far as it will go without pain: yoga, stretching, deep breathing.

   Endurance or conditioning exercises— Do you get tired quickly? Try cardiovascular exercises to build your stamina. Great examples of lung- and heart-friendly exercises include walking, running, biking, swimming, rowing, and aerobics.

   Strengthening exercises—Do you want to be a little stronger? Consider strength and weight-training exercises to help build the strong muscles, ligaments, and tendons needed to support your body.

4. **Build your own home gym.** It will save you time and money. Equip your home with electronic treadmills or stationary bicycles—and use them. You'll save a lot time and money by staying home and not paying fitness club memberships. Go slowly, keep your goals realistic and you could achieve remarkable results.

5. **Exercise in a group.** A great way to do this would be to persuade your workplace management to institute a daily exercise program for the employees.

   If you feel more comfortable and get more motivated exercising with a crowd, try playing team sports, such as softball, bowling, golf, soccer, and basketball.

6. **Find activities that are convenient—**That way, you won't have to go out of your way to exercise, ensuring that you stay motivated. Some inexpensive ways to get a great workout include:
   - Jumping rope
   - Mowing the lawn
   - Running
   - Rollerblading
   - Hiking
   - Stair climbing
   - Gardening
   - Bicycling
   - House cleaning
   - Vacuuming
   - Walking
   - Washing windows

Chapter 17

Natural Healing Plants:

What You Need to Know

Natural, plant-based remedies have been the mainstay of doctors and healers since the beginning of time. Even today, about 25% of the pharmaceutical drugs on the market contain one or more isolated compounds from some type of natural plant. In most cases, though, these compounds are even more effective and safer when they are used in their natural state, as part of the whole plant.

Plant medicine, also know as **phytomedicine** ("phyto" means plant), uses preparations from the root, leaf, flower, and fruits of plants and herbs. Researchers have often found that this method offers more subtle and powerful ben0efits than inserting isolated plant chemicals into medicines.

Menthol (from the peppermint plant) or digitoxin (from the foxglove herb) are examples of chemicals that have been isolated from a herb or plant. By itself, these two chemicals are not considered phytomedicines. A cup of chamomile, on the other hand, is a phytomedicine because it is made from the dried flowers.

The Proven Effectiveness of Plants

Plant-based remedies have been employed for thousands of years by physicians and traditional healers. Their writings, experiments, and anecdotes have added to our wealth of knowledge about the uses and effectiveness of herbs. Today, rigorous scientific studies continue to validate many of the traditional uses of herbs while uncovering even more useful properties than previously imagined.

Herbal medications are gaining popularity and acceptance throughout the world. Medical and scientific journals routinely issue new reports about the beneficial effects of herbs.

In Europe, herbal preparations are routinely prescribed by doctors alongside the standard pharmaceutical drugs. Asia has a long, accomplished history of herbalism. Chinese pharmacy texts, for example, are considered authoritative sources on plant-based medications.

In the United States, herbal medicines are classified as dietary supplements and must meet strict labeling requirements before they can be sold in stores. Manufacturers are restricted by law from making false claims about a herb's healing properties. For example, they can claim that a garlic product can help reduce cholesterol. What they cannot claim is that because garlic helps reduce cholesterol it also reduces the risk of heart disease.

Know What You Are Taking

It's helps to know both the common and botanical names of herbs, that way you really know what you are getting. For example, Siberian ginseng is not actually a ginseng (or *Panax*), but the root of a shrub, *Eleutherococcus setaceous*.

Also, be aware that any substance—natural or man-made—can cause problems for some people, especially those with allergies, chronic illnesses, and those that are taking prescription or other drugs. Consult your doctor or other health care professional before starting a herbal medication program.

Chapter 18

Simple and Effective Natural Home Remedies to Soothe Your Gallstone Pain

INFUSIONS

Pouring boiling water over herbs is an effective way to extract their medicinal properties, especially when using the leaves and flowers of herbs.

How to Make an Infusion

1. Place the herbs in a tea pot with a tightly-closing lid. Boil water in a separate pot.
2. Pour the boiling water into the tea pot. Let it sit (or infuse) for 10 minutes.
3. Using a strainer or sieve, strain the infusion from the tea pot into a cup. Strain the rest of the infusion into a jug and refrigerate (holds for up to 3 days).

Standard Quantities

Dried herbs: 25 grams (1 ounce) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) of boiling water.

Fresh herbs: 50 grams (2 ounces) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces / 500 milliliters) of boiling water.

Standard Doses

2/3 cup (150 milliliters / 5 fluid ounces) 3 times a day.

DECOCTIONS

Ideal for extracting the healing ingredients from the hardier parts of the herb, such as the roots and stems. Unlike infusions, decoctions involve simmering the herb in water. You may also combine flowers with roots (e.g. chamomile with dandelion) by pouring a strained decoction of a root on to the flower to make an infusion.

How to Make a Decoction

1. Place the herb in a saucepan. Pour cold water on the herb.
2. Boil and let simmer until the liquid is reduced by a third.
3. Strain the decoction through a sieve into a jug. You may refrigerate it for up to 3 days.

Standard Quantities

Dried herbs: 25 grams (1 ounce) to 3 2/3 cups (1 ¾ pints/750 milliliters) of boiling water reduced to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) after simmering.

Fresh herbs: 50 grams (2 ounces) to 3 2/3 cups (1 ¾ pints/750 milliliters) of boiling water reduced to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) after simmering.

Standard Doses

2/3 cup (150 milliliters / 5 fluid ounces) 3 times a day.

HOT OIL INFUSIONS

Herbs can be used to make soothing extracts for massage lotions, creams, and ointments. Works best when you make small batches, so they can be used up before spoiling. Use light oils, such as sunflower, safflower, and sweet almond oil. Rugged, more woody herbs (e.g. comfrey) are ideal for hot oil infusions. More delicate, flower-like herbs, such as marigold and St. John's Wort are better as cold infused oils.

How to Make a Hot Oil Infusion

1. Place the herb and oil in a glass bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Heat gently for 2 hours.
2. Pour the infusion through a porous jelly bag into a clean jug.
3. Squeeze out the oil from the bag for a stronger extract. Wear rubber gloves, since it will be hot.
4. Pour the extract into clean, dark bottles. Seal and store for up to 3 months in a cool place.

Standard Quantities

Dried herbs: 250 grams (9 ounces) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) of a pure vegetable oil.

Fresh herbs: 500 grams (1 ¼ pounds) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) of a pure vegetable oil.

COLD OIL INFUSIONS

Great for extracting the beneficial properties from plants which have volatile medicinal oils that can escape if heated.

How to Make a Cold Oil Infusion

1. Pack a large glass jar with herbs. Pour oil to the top of the jar. Seal and place in a sunny spot for 2 weeks.
2. Slowly pour the infusion through a porous jelly bag into a clean jug. The oil will take time to filter.
3. Squeeze out the oil from the bag. For an even stronger extract, you can reuse this infused oil to repeat steps 1-3 using new herbs.
4. Pour the extract into clean, dark bottles. Seal and store in a cool place. Small bottles work best, since once opened, the infusion must be used up or it deteriorates.

Standard Quantities

Dried herbs: 250 grams (9 ounces) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) of a pure vegetable oil.

Fresh herbs: 500 grams (1 ¼ pounds) to 2 cups (16 fluid ounces/500 milliliters) of a pure vegetable oil.

Chapter 19

The 11 Most Effective Herbal Remedies for the Gallbladder

Plant botanicals can be powerful healing options for your liver and gallbladder health. They can stimulate your liver to produce cleaner, less cholesterol-saturated bile that will more effectively dissolve and wash away existing and potential gallstones.

What's more, herbal formulations can relieve inflammation and relax the critical smooth muscles in your digestive tract responsible for rapidly moving out of your system the toxins and waste products that constantly enter your body through the foods and drinks you consume.

Herbs are readily available in most health-food stores as whole, dried, and supplemental forms. They are relatively inexpensive and easy to prepare.

(Instructions on how to make infusions, decoctions, and other herbal remedies mentioned here can be found on page 61).

Note: *Consult your doctor or health practitioner before taking any herbal remedies or any other self-medication. Herbs work best when combined with diet and lifestyle changes.*

Here's a list of the most beneficial herbs for your liver, gallbladder, and overall digestive health:

DANDELION ROOT AND LEAVES (*Taraxacum officinale*)

May promote your bile flow, helping to dissolve potential gallstones. Can also have diuretic effects (increase in urine flow), which can assist in eliminating toxic substances from your system. Helps restore liver function and has laxative effects.

Can be combined with vervain, barberry, wahoo, or fringe tree; or add 5 drops of goldenseal to improve liver function.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Tincture: 10-15 drops, 3 times a day. Use hot water that has been allowed to cool.

Decoction: Add 1 cup of hot water to 3-4 grams of herb. Bring to a boil, simmer, and strain.

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

FUMITORY (*Fumaria officinalis*)

Can relieve gallbladder disease symptoms and gastrointestinal spasms in the upper part of the digestive tract—including the esophagus, stomach, liver, and gallbladder.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Infusion: Pour 1 cup of hot water over 2 grams of herb. Drink up to 3 doses per day

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

GLOBE ARTICHOKE LEAVES (*Cynara scalymus*)

Can relieve gallbladder discomfort. Not recommended if pregnant or breastfeeding.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Infusion: Pour 1 cup of hot water over 1-2 grams of dried leaves and infuse. Drink 1-2 doses per day.

Extract: 200-600 mg. per day

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

GREATER CELANDINE (*Chelidonium majus*)

Helps alleviate gallbladder and gastrointestinal tract spasms. Don't give to children.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Infusion: 1 gram of herb to 1 cup of hot water.

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

PEPPERMINT LEAVES (*Mentha piperita*)

Provides relief for gallbladder and biliary tract spasms. Reduces flatulence by relaxing smooth muscles in organs, allowing them to release gas.

Can be combined with American cranesbill to help reduce acid secretions. Add marshmallow root, meadowsweet, and licorice to soothe inflammation. **Caution**: May reduce milk flow if nursing.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Infusion: Pour 1 cup of boiled water over 1.5 grams of dried herbs.

Tincture: Mix 1 teaspoon of tincture in water. Drink several doses a day.

PEPPERMINT OIL (*Mentha piperita*)

May help calm spasms in the biliary tract. Helps with flatulence by distending muscle rings in the digestive tract to release gas more effectively. Has antibacterial properties. **Caution**: Don't use on infants.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Inhaled: 3-4 drops in water, 2-3 times a day

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

RADISH ROOT (*Raspharus sativas*)

Acts as a choleretic (bile stimulant) and antimicrobial. Stimulates gastrointestinal movement.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Liquid: Blend into a juice. Drink 1-2 teaspoons of fresh juice several times a day.

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

WORMWOOD (*Artemisia absinthium*)

Bitter digestive stimulant. Promotes liver function and expels intestinal worms. Can help alleviate sluggish digestion, poor appetite, and gastritis. Often prescribed for jaundice and hepatitis. May also help alleviate biliary tract spasms.

Use the aerial parts (leaves and stems). **Caution:** Don't use the oil, it's volatile and can cause nervous system damage.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Infusion: 1 gram of dried herb to 1 cup of hot water. Drink 2 cups in the morning and at noon every day.

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

GOLDENSEAL (*Hydrastis canadensis*)

A traditional healing herb long used by Native Americans. Beneficial for indigestion, local inflammations, and liver disorders.

Has astringent (contracts tissues and blood vessels) and tonic (muscle stimulant) effects. Bile and digestive stimulant.

The rhizome (root-like stem) of the herb can heal gastric mucous membranes. Available in different forms, including tinctures, capsules, dried rhizome, and compound tablets.

Caution: Avoid if pregnant or if you have high blood pressure.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

***Tincture*:** Take 0.5 – 2 ml. three times a day. Larger doses are more laxative. Also useful as a liver tonic for digestive problems associated with food sensitivity and excessive alcoholic consumption (ody).

Ready-made formulations: Follow directions on the label.

BARBERRY (*Berberis vulgaris*)

Bitter herb useful for relieving gallbladder inflammation. Actions: (1) Stimulates bile flow; (2) Eases liver congestion; (3) Laxative.

Combines with anti-inflammatories such as goldenseal (5 drops tincture per dose) and liver tonics like vervain or globe artichoke. **Caution:** Avoid if pregnant.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Decoction: Add 15 grams of herb to 600 milliliters of water. **Tincture:** Up to 8 milliliters a day.

FRINGE TREE (*Chionanthus virginicus*)

Actions: (1) Stimulates bile flow and liver function; (2) Laxative; (3) Cleansing.

Combine with bitters, liver tonics, or stimulants such as dandelion, milk thistle, chicory, globe artichoke, or centaury; or with anti-inflammatories such as pot marigold.

Daily dose (try one at a time):

Decoction: 1 tablespoon

Tincture: Up to 5 milliliters a day.

Chapter 20

The Emergency Gallstone Relief Plan:

The 4-Step Action Plan for Treating Gallstone Attacks

Step 1: Modify Your Diet

An acute gallbladder attack (*acute cholecystitis*) calls for immediate action. A gallstone may have lodged in one of your bile ducts, blocking the flow of bile and causing your gallbladder to become inflamed. **Caution:** if you are in extreme, unbearable pain, seek medical attention right away.

In many cases, however, these quick and simple steps should relieve your pain and inflammation naturally and effectively:

1. To begin with, **cut all solid foods and drink only distilled or spring water** until the pain goes down.
2. For the next three days following the attack, drink only water and freshly-made juices—such as **pear, beet, and apple juice**.
3. By this time, the inflammation should have subsided enough to begin adding solid foods to the juice and water diet. (If the inflammation persists, see a doctor immediately).
4. Start with a simple solid food recipe, such as the **Raw Beet Recipe:**

Raw Beet Recipe

INGREDIENTS

Raw beets
Olive oil
Lemons
Granny Smith apples

DIRECTIONS

Shred the raw beets and add 2 tablespoons of olive oil with lemon juice squeezed into it. Stir in a bowl. Peel the apples and place them through a blender or food processor to make fresh uncooked applesauce. Combine the applesauce with the raw beets and olive oil with lemon juice mixture in the bowl.

5. Slowly add more solid foods to your diet. Some beneficial foods you can include in your diet are:
    - Black cherries
    - Pears
    - Beets (raw or cooked)
    - Fresh beet tops steamed with spinach leaves, kale
    - Yogurt (plain, non-flavored)

6. Continue drinking fresh, blended fruit and vegetable juices. Recommended juices:
    - Carrot
    - Beet
    - Cucumber (with a little garlic, radish, or fresh dandelion roots)
    - Grape
    - Pear
    - Grapefruit
    - Lemon

7. Other suggestions:
    - **Avoid animal products as much as possible.**
    - Eat frequent, small meals (3-5 meals a day).
    - **Include more soluble fiber in your diet.**
    - Don't eat refined carbohydrates.
    - **Consume as many raw foods as possible.**

Step 2: Topical Pain Relief—Castor Oil Packs

Castor oil packs applied topically to the affected area have been traditionally used for relieving inflammation and pain related to gallstones.

DIRECTIONS

Saturate a piece of clean cheesecloth or other soft white cotton material in castor oil that has been heated—but not boiled—in a saucepan.

Apply the cloth to the affected area and cover with a piece of clear plastic that is larger in size than the cloth, to keep any excess oil from dripping out.

For best results, keep the pack warm by placing a heating pad over the plastic. Maintain the pack for a half-hour to two hours, depending on your pain relief needs.

Step 3: Hydrotherapy—Hot and Cold Packs

Water is not only a beneficial drink, but also works as pain-relief treatment when applied to the affected areas. Hot and cold packs are one form of hydrotherapy that can relieve gallbladder-related pain and spasms (biliary colic pain).

To relieve biliary colic pain, apply a hot water pack to the abdomen and lower back 10 to 15 minutes several times a day, followed by a short cold water pack application. Repeat 2 to 5 times a week.

Step 4: The Gallbladder Cleanse

One popular method of eliminating all types of gallstones—from tiny ones to large ones—is known as **The Gallbladder Cleanse**. Health practitioners are increasingly employing this safe, effective natural remedy to treat their gallstone and gallbladder-problem patients.

The Gallbladder Cleanse can not only rid your body of gallstones but it can also cleanse your system of the undesirable compounds that have built up in your digestive tract over a period of many years from the foods you eat, the fluids you drink, the products you put on your skin, and the air you breathe.

All this waste clogs up your gastro-intestinal tract, which prevents you from fully absorbing the nutrients your body needs to be healthy. Once you cleanse your body of the substances that interfere with normal functioning, you remove the obstacles that are keeping your body from healing itself.

Chapter 21

The Gallbladder Cleanse:
How it Gets Rid of Your Gallstones

The gallbladder cleanse you will learn shortly is not just about eliminating the gallstones you now have, although that's the main benefit you will experience immediately.

The cleanse has a deeper purpose. Basically, it will clear out the undesirable waste products from your system so that your organs can do their job more effectively.

Once your system is unclogged, your liver and gallbladder will crank up to their full potential. Your other digestive organs, such as the stomach, the pancreas, and the intestine, will also work better than before. Even your blood circulation and respiratory system will improve.
You will feel more energy, pain will disappear, and diseases will be prevented.

All these are wonderful side benefits the cleanse will reward you with. But let's get back to the reasons you are probably reading this book: to eliminate your gallstones, prevent new ones, and keep your gallbladder.

So how exactly does the cleanse eliminate my gallstones?

The cleanse reduces the cholesterol in the bile by thoroughly cleaning of all the organs and ducts that carry bile—the liver, gallbladder, and the various bile ducts. It's important to note the fact that bile gets reused quite a bit…almost 95% of it is recycled by your system. The cleaner you can keep your bile, the better. This optimizes the performance of all these organs, so that bile can remain as clean as possible at every stage.

For one thing, the Gallbladder Cleanse makes it easier for excess cholesterol to leave your body. Excess cholesterol can only leave your body through the liver, by way of the bile this organ secretes. Since cholesterol is relatively heavy and hard to keep dissolved, it's wise to keep as little of it in your bile as possible.

Keep in mind that bile goes through three basic stages: production (liver), storage (gallbladder), and transport (bile ducts). Maintaining a clean, cholesterol-free atmosphere at each stage is absolutely critical.

What it boils down to is this: A clean liver will produce cleaner, smoother-flowing bile that can dissolve more cholesterol. A clean gallbladder will be able to store bile without retaining gallstone-causing cholesterol residue. And clean bile ducts will ensure that bile flows quickly to its destination in the small intestines.

The bile cycle in detail

Bile is produced in the liver, and travels through a complex journey to the intestines before most of it returns to the liver (only 5% leaves the body). At every turn, bile make its way through countless tight, narrow spaces, where it can easily leave behind sludge and cholesterol residues.

Let's take a quick look at this process: First, the liver cells (hepatocytes) dissolve cholesterol and secrete it into the bile, which then travels between the dense, tightly-packed liver cells (caniculi).

Eventually, the bile drains into the right and left hepatic ducts, then into the common hepatic duct, passes into the cystic duct, and finally makes it to the gallbladder, where it gets concentrated and stored until you eat.

When you eat, the gallbladder discharges the bile through the cystic duct into the common bile duct. It then reaches the duodenum (the first part of the small intestine), where it helps to digest fats in the food.

After this, most (95%) of the used bile gets reabsorbed when it reaches the last portion of the small intestine (the terminal ileum). It eventually returns to the liver to be reused.

As you can see, bile makes many stops and detours along its cycle. The last thing you want is for this bile to be oversaturated with cholesterol. This not only increases the chances of gallstones but also gives the liver extra work—processing the old cholesterol on top of the new cholesterol that is constantly coming in from the blood.

The gallbladder: A crucial stop in bile's journey

Let's back up for a minute and zoom in on the gallbladder. Here is where clean bile becomes more important than ever.

The gallbladder receives 50 to 100 tablespoons (500 to 1,000 milliliters) of bile a day from the liver. Yet it can only hold a mere 5 tablespoons (50 milliliters) of bile at one time. So what does it do? It concentrates the bile by removing the water, reducing it by up to 10 times in the process.

The bile is now a thick, gooey-like substance. The big problem with this is that it now has almost no liquid to keep the cholesterol dissolved. Cholesterol molecules are heavy. It is very easy at this point for them to become solid and get deposited in the lining of the gallbladder, a perfect place to start developing into new gallstones.

This is yet another reason why keeping your bile cholesterol low in the first place is so important. Also, the cleaner your gallbladder is, the less likely it will be to attract residues from this concentrated bile.

What types of foods and herbs can increase bile flow?

- Herbs that can help increase bile flow (referred to as "cholagogues") include: dandelion, wormwood, black walnut, goldenseal, sage, daikon, wheat grass, and barley grass. Other plant-derived products that act as cholagogues include: radish, olives, olive oil, and walnut.

- "Good" fats, such as olive oil, help reduce cholesterol. Just 3-5 tablespoons a day can have positive effects, preferably taken with lemon or on salads.

- Good fats are also found in flaxseed oil, fish oil, and raw coconut oil. Grass-fed beef is a good source, although fish is widely considered to be the best source of animal fats.

- "Bad" fats--such as those found in margarine, fried oil, hydrogenated fats, and in white animal, pork, and sheep fats--can increase your cholesterol levels.

- Fiber helps to clean the bile in the small intestine before it is reabsorbed. It acts like a sponge, binding to the bile cholesterol, as well as to various undesirable heavy metals carried by the bile.

Chapter 22

The Gallbladder Cleanse:

Step-by-Step Instructions

The gallbladder cleanse you will learn here is designed to eliminate your gallstones naturally, with minimal discomfort. This traditional home remedy could eliminate a significant number of gallstones, quickly, painlessly, and without invasive surgery.

It can also dramatically improve your digestion—the very foundation of a healthy system. What's more, this simple, natural treatment should also help relieve your allergies as well as eliminate any shoulder, upper arm, and upper back pain you may have. Overall, you will gain more energy and a greater sense of well-being than you may have enjoyed in years.

Before you begin, please read the Gallbladder Cleanse Guidelines on page 82. Make sure you understand everything there. We highly recommend you also consult your doctor or other health care professional before doing this cleanse. Only a qualified medical professional can determine your individual needs and whether you should do this cleanse or not.

Cleanse Recommendations:

- Do the cleanse when you have two or three days off of work, since you will need to rest the entire day after the cleanse.
- Stop taking any medications, vitamins, or pills, if possible, the day before the cleanse.
- Avoid eating fats for breakfast and lunch the day of the cleanse. The lack of fat will reduce your gallbladder's contractions, which will build up bile pressure, helping more stones to be pushed out during the cleanse.
- Drinking a sip of tomato or pineapple juice can help if you wish to hide the taste of the olive oil and grapefruit juice.

INGREDIENTS

- Cold-pressed, extra-virgin olive oil 1/2 cup (125 ml.)
- 1 large grapefruit
- Epsom salts (Magnesium sulfate) 4 tbsp.
- Water 3 cups (750 ml.)
- Measuring cup

Optional Ingredients:

- Vitamin C powder
- Ornithine capsules
- Black walnut tincture
- Hydrochloric acid (HCL) drops

Alternate Ingredients:

You may substitute 1 large grapefruit with 2 large lemons if you prefer. Water may be replaced by either 3 cups of fresh grapefruit juice or 3 cups of fresh apple juice.

Additional Ingredients (Optional):

- Apple, carrot, orange, or grapefruit juice—for a short fast before the treatment.
- Tomato juice or pineapple juice—to drink during the treatment if you wish to hide the taste of the lemon juice or olive oil.

How to Prepare the Epsom Salts Solution:

You will need to prepare 1 serving of the Epsom salts solution at the following times:

(1) The day of the cleanse: At 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

(2) The day after the cleanse: Upon waking up and again 2 hours later.

To prepare 1 serving of Epsom salts solution: Mix 1 tablespoon of Epsom salts in 3/4 cup of water (you can substitute grapefruit or apple juice for the water).

How to Prepare the Olive Oil and Grapefruit Solution:

You will need to prepare this solution at 9:45 p.m. on the day of the cleanse. Follow these instructions:

1. Pour 1/2 cup of olive oil into a pint jar with a screw-on lid. Add 2 drops of HCL (Hydrochloric acid) for sterilization.
2. Wash the grapefruit thoroughly in hot water twice and then dry. Hand-squeeze the grapefruit to make between 1/2 and 3/4 cup of grapefruit juice. Add black walnut tincture to help cleanse intestinal parasites.
3. Pour the mix into the pint jar. Close the lid and shake the jar vigorously until the solution becomes watery—something that only happens when using fresh grapefruit juice.

GALLBLADDER CLEANSE SCHEDULE

You will need 2-3 days off at home to perform the Gallbladder Cleanse. The first day for the actual cleanse and one or two days to recover. Follow the schedule below closely. Timing is essential for the cleanse to work.

The Day of the Cleanse

Morning

Eat a light breakfast and lunch. Leave out any foods that contain fats, such as butter or milk. Some examples of foods you can eat include: cooked cereal with fruit, fruit juice, bread with preserves or honey, baked potatoes, and vegetables.

12:00 p.m.

Eat only liquids after this time, such as apple juice, water, and chamomile tea.

2:00 p.m.

Do not eat any food or drink any liquid after this time in order to avoid getting sick when you do the cleanse.

6:00 p.m.

Prepare and drink 1 serving of the Epsom salts solution (read instructions above). You may add 1/8 teaspoon of Vitamin C powder for taste if you wish.

8:00 p.m.

Start getting all your routine tasks completed so you can be in bed around 10:15 p.m.—the timing is very important. You must be in bed quickly after you're done for the cleanse to start flushing out gallstones.

9:45 p.m.

Prepare the olive oil and grapefruit juice solution (read instructions above).

10:00 p.m.

Drink the olive oil and grapefruit juice solution slowly. Drink it all within 5 - 15 minutes for best results. A little bit of honey can help with the taste between sips.

Note: Taking 4 ornithine capsules after the first few sips to help you sleep better.

After drinking the olive oil and grapefruit juice solution

Go to bed immediately and lie on your right side with your head raised on the pillow. This helps the olive oil flow faster through your stomach and into the liver, gallbladder, and bile ducts where it is most needed to lubricate the elimination of the gallstones.

Once in bed, lie still for 20 minutes. At this point, you might even start to feel stones starting to slide down your bile ducts. This should feel rather painless, since the Epsom salts relax and open up the bile ducts, making it easier for the stones to pass. In addition, the lemon juice works like a laxative. Its acidity helps soften the alkalinity of the bile and gallstones, making them easier to remove.

During the night, the cleansing action of the olive oil and lemon juice could cause some discomfort in your abdominal region. This is a common reaction to the removal of the toxins, waste products, and bile sludge that have accumulated for years in your digestive system.

Most people have found slight discomfort proved to be well worth it. Your body will feel a lot better once all those dangerous contaminants are gone. Try your best to relax and gall asleep in order for the stones to completely leave your body.

The Day After the Cleanse

2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m.

Some people wake up around this time with the urge to go to the toilet. Now is when you might pass your first gallstones.

Others pass their first stone-embedded stools as late as 10:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. When will you pass your gallstones? It all depends on how your body reacts to the gallbladder cleanse and how firmly your gallstones are attached to your gallbladder, liver, and bile ducts.

In the morning

As soon as you wake up (or after 6:00 a.m., whichever happens first), prepare and drink 1 serving of the Epsom salts solution. If you feel nausea or indigestion, wait until it passes before drinking the solution. As soon as you are done, return to bed.

Note: It is normal to have diarrhea in the morning.

2 hours after waking up:

Prepare and drink 1 serving of the Epsom salts solution. Return to bed.

4 hours after waking up:

You may now begin eating food. Start by drinking fruit juice, such as apple, carrot, orange, or grapefruit juice. Wait 30 minutes more before eating whole fruits. One hour later, you may eat a light regular meal. You should feel nearly fully recovered by dinner.

Follow Up Cleansing

Your symptoms should disappear for a few days because you have cleared out your first round of stones. More stones from the rear of your organs will be moving forward, however, ready to be flushed out with the next cleanse. Repeat the gallbladder cleanse every two weeks until all your gallstones are gone, except if you are ill.

Chapter 23

Gallbladder Cleanse Guidelines

When Should I Do the Cleanse?

Do the cleanse on a weekend or whenever you plan to have a few days off as you'll want to relax and allow your body to recuperate from the cleanse. After all, the cleanse has a tough job to do—it must expel years of accumulated waste and sludge from your system.

It's only natural that you will feel a bit exhausted after all that. But wouldn't you rather go through this healing process once rather than continue living with all this toxic material inside your body?

How Do I Prepare for the Cleanse?

Many people find it useful to lighten their diet for one or two days before the cleanse. This helps to start clearing your system of the toxic buildup that has accumulated over the years.

Patients have reported more success with their gallbladder cleanses after doing the Gallbladder Cleanse Pre-Treatment. If you have followed a poor diet and haven't exercised regularly for many years, it might be a good idea to follow the Pre-Treatment.

PRE-TREATMENT DIRECTIONS:

For one or two days drink half a gallon (2 liters) of fresh, pure apple juice per day. Use organic green apples, which contain more pectin than red apples. The pectin begins to soften the gallstones. For best results, blend your own fresh apple juice. Otherwise, buy *organic* apple juice, and eat organic green apples, as well.

Many people find it helpful to drink up to 5 cups a day of chamomile tea. In addition to the apple juice, you may also drink other juices, such as carrot juice, unsweetened orange juice, and grapefruit juice. Drink plenty of water and eat a light, moderate diet (see chapters 11 - 14 for diet guidelines).

What is the role of the Epsom salts?

The Epsom salts (Magnesium sulfate) dilate the bile ducts, to reduce the risk that a stone will become lodged there. If you suspect that a stone may have become lodged (this will produce a mild, dull pain in comparison with the extremely sharp pain of a gallstone attack), you might try repeating the procedure. This has worked for many people, although each case is different. Consult a health care practitioner if you are unsure about repeating the cleanse.

Epsom salts have a very long history of safe and effective use as a colon cleanser. Some people may find the taste hard to get used to, however. Try adding a few drops of fresh lemon juice into the blend. Drink it with a straw inserted towards the back of your mouth. Sip it quickly, without breathing. Afterwards, rinse your mouth and brush your teeth.

How many gallstones will I need to pass?

Experts believe that up to 2,000 gallstones might need to pass in order to completely cleanse your liver, and for your allergies, bursitis, and upper back pains to disappear.

It is common for many people to pass over 200 pea-sized green and tan stones with each cleanse. They might crumble when you poke them with a stick—this means they are composed of pure cholesterol and fat.

Your bile ducts could have millions of tiny white cholesterol crystals that have yet to form into stones. This “chaff” might pass into your toilet and float on the water, as well.

How will I know I’m passing gallstones?

You may actually feel the stones traveling down the bile duct. It’s an unmistakable feeling…light but very discernable; it sort of tickles. On the other hand, you may not feel any movement at all. Rest assured, however, the stones are still being extracted from your system.

What will the gallstones look like?

The gallstones will be easy to spot. Most will be green, from being coated with bile. Others might be tan, brown, and even black.

They will range from the size of small peas to, in some cases, as big as golf balls. There might be just a few gallstones or, in many cases, hundreds of gallstones.

Many of the stones might dissolve or crumble when you poke them. Inside they will usually be green in color. Most likely these are cholesterol stones from the liver.

Other stones—particularly the light green ones—may be produced inside the intestines, or could form purely from bile or from smaller gallstones.

The gallstones that are composed largely of cholesterol will float in the water. Some that contain large amounts of calcium and protein might sink to the bottom of the toilet.

Everyone's cleanse will yield different results. Almost everyone that does the gallbladder cleanse correctly, however, should pass a healthy number of stones.

You might also observe green objects, greenish liquid, and sand-like grit in your toilet bowl. These are small gallstones, sludge, or gallstone residue, most likely dissolved by the lemon juice.

Do all gallstones come from the same place?

The answer is no. Gallstones, in spite of their name, don't necessarily always form in the gallbladder.

Bile may precipitate into stones in various different places. The stones have different names, depending on where they form: gallbladder (gallstones), liver (liver stones), bile ducts (intrahepatic stones), or intestines (feces).

It may be difficult to know exactly where the stones came from once they pass in your stool. That's why liver and gallbladder flushes clean your entire biliary system (liver, gallbladder, bile ducts) and your intestines—so you are sure to get all the existing and potential stones, regardless of where they formed.

Is the cleanse painful?

Fewer than 3% of all people who try the gallbladder cleanse may experience some pain, but it doesn't mean that you will need surgery. In very rare cases, a stone may get stuck while the cleanse is taking place.

There is a long list of natural remedies that can be used in case of pain. Taking some extra Epsom salts with a few glasses of water usually releases a stuck stone. A second flush the day after the first one often helps. Hot bath and foot zone massages have also helped pain sufferers.

What can I eat after the cleanse?

Your body has gone through a process that it probably is not used to. It has shed many years of accumulated waste. It will take time to heal from the strong change it has undergone.

After your gallbladder cleanse, it is critical that you nourish your system with plenty of rest, good food, and an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals.

Here are some recommendations:

Supplements: Take the recommended dosages of vitamins and minerals, especially Vitamins A, B, C, and E and the following minerals: magnesium, potassium, methionine, choline, inositol, and lecithin.

Nutrition: Eat as healthy as possible. This means cutting down or eliminating all deep-fried foods and using only vegetable oils that are cold-pressed.

Water: Drink 1/2 gallon (2 liters) of water a day

How do I prepare the toilet for capturing the gallstones I pass?

You should have your toilet ready ahead of time to capture the stools you will pass during your cleanse.

Place the colander or net under the toilet seat lid to catch your stool. You may want to tie it to the lid to make the job easier.

The colander or net should be large enough to catch all of your gallstone-containing stools.

What tools do I need to collect the gallstones?

Before your cleanse, take a few minutes to arrange next to your toilet the following tools you will need to separate the gallstones from the stool:

- Glass pitcher filled with water
- Rubber gloves
- Face mask
- Paint-stirring stick
- Glass jar with screw-on lid

How do I separate the gallstones from stool?

After you have your bowel movements, separate the gallstones from the stool in the colander. Put on the rubber gloves and face mask to protect yourself from the infection and odor of the feces.

Use the paint stirrer to carefully separate the gallstones from the stool. Pour the water from the pitcher slowly over the feces to help wash out the unwanted portions.

Where do I put the gallstones?

Pick up your gallstones with the plastic spoon or fork and place them in the glass jar. After you're done, seal your new gallstone collection with the screw-on lid.

Make sure you clearly label your impressive new exhibit. Write something like, "gallstones, (today's date), (my name)."

The gallstones in the jar will remind you of the important steps you are taking to preserve not only your gallbladder but to regain your overall health.

The gallstones should dissolve in a few days, thanks to the acidity of the lemon juice. If you want to preserve them longer, freeze them in your refrigerator. Just make sure you label them clearly so they don't end up as someone's snack!

SAFETY NOTES

Some people may feel ill for 1 or 2 days after the cleanse. Serious complications are extremely rare, however. Most have happened when the individuals didn't follow all the steps correctly.

Gallbladder cleanses are extremely safe if done correctly. Even people in their 70s and 80s have enjoyed the great benefits of gallbladder cleansing.

In any case, always consult your doctor or qualified health practitioner before doing a gallbladder cleanse, or any other type of self-medication.

WARNING:

DO NOT TRY THIS CLEANSE UNTIL AN ULTRASOUND SCAN HAS DETERMINED THE SIZE AND QUANTITY OF YOUR STONES. IF YOUR STONES ARE TOO LARGE TO BE SUCCESSFULLY PASSED USING THIS METHOD, THEY COULD BECOME LODGED IN THE BILE DUCT, LEADING TO SEVERE PAIN AND POSSIBLE SURGERY.

Chapter 24

The Gallbladder Cleanse:
Frequently Asked Questions

Is it safe to do the Liver and Gallbladder Cleanse?

Yes! This popular cleanse has been prescribed by natural doctors for many years. Thousands of people have done it on their own, as well. Nearly everyone is glad they did it.
Compared to surgery, the liver and gallbladder cleanse is virtually risk-free. And instead of a hole where your gallbladder used to be, you get a nice reward: you keep your gallbladder and enjoy a new lease on your health…the most valuable thing you can own.

Is the Liver and Gallbladder Cleanse painful?

Not for most people. Over 95% of cleanse users have reported a pain-free flush. One out of 100 people may feel some pain, one out of 500 may encounter sharp pain.

Can a gallstone get stuck while I'm doing the cleanse?

Yes, but this is extremely rare. Most people who experience a lodged stone will solve the problem by repeating the flush the very next day if the pain is constant or if there are other symptoms of pancreatitis or symptoms of jaundice. Only one out of 10,000 or one out of 20,000 may need surgery, in order to overcome life threatening pancreatitis or jaundice. Always check with your health care practitioner if you are unsure about repeating the cleanse.

Can I do the cleanse if I have a cold?

If it's a mild cold, you shouldn't have a problem doing the cleanse. It's better to wait until you get better if it's a heavy cold with strong symptoms.

Is it OK to cleanse if I have a fever?

Just as with colds, mild fevers usually don't stop people from cleansing. If it's a high fever, though, wait until it passes before doing the treatment.

Can I cleanse if my gallbladder is inflamed?

Go on a juice fast for two weeks before cleansing. Fresh vegetable juices should bring down the inflammation enough to cleanse safely.

Can diabetics do the Gallbladder Cleanse?

A few hours without food can be a concern for some diabetics. The magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts) you will take at 6 p.m. and again at 8 p.m. serve as an adequate food substitute for most people. The olive oil and lemon you drink at 10 p.m. should satisfy your hunger, as well.

You could drink a simple, fat-free vegetable soup a few hours after the flush if your blood sugar falls too low. Avoid products that contain refined sugars and flour, like candy bars, bread and pasta; they can cause severe hypoglycemia just a few hours after eating.

Eating foods that are easy to digest, fat-free, and contain few simple sugars should keep your glycemic index at manageable levels. Good choices are: home-made vegetable or potato soups, lean meats and fish, and salads.

Can I cleanse more often than recommended?

Most health practitioners advise that you wait 1 to 2 weeks between cleanses. However, some people have found that a second cleanse the day after the first one has alleviated pain and swelling they might be feeling. Others have successfully done 2-4 cleanses within a 7 day period.

How can you prevent severe discomfort so you don't have to consider another cleanse so soon?

Drink plenty of water before and after cleansing—pain and swelling are common symptoms of water shortage.

Drink at least half a gallon (about 2 liters) of clean water a day—tea, coffee, and soft drinks don't count as water, and may even contribute to water shortage, health authorities believe.

Eat a natural, healthy diet between flushes, so your system—especially your kidneys—doesn't get taxed. Consuming too much protein can overstress and weaken your kidneys over the long term. Your body turns excess protein into urea, a waste product that must be disposed of through the kidneys.

Include raw yogurt and other products that contain probiotic cultures in your diet to help maintain your bowel flora. Cultured dairy products are more easily digested than whole dairy versions.

Digestive enzymes can also help ease swelling and indigestion discomforts.

Is it normal to feel pain when doing the liver and gallbladder cleanse?

Liver and gallbladder cleanses are very safe in nearly every case. Just like with any therapy, though, some people will experience pain and discomfort. A common cause of pain may be that larger stones remain inside your system. It can take several cleanses before these stones get pushed out. Most people need 3 to 5 cleanses to completely wash out their system. In a few rare cases, up to 40 cleanses have been needed.

What are the most common causes of pain and what can you do if it happens?

Cause: Your liver is congested; it doesn't let stones come out.
Solution: Another cleanse may thrust the stones out of the liver.

Cause: Too many stones inside your gallbladder.
Solution: Another cleanse may cause further pain.

Cause: Your gallbladder is too weak to push out enough stones.
Solution: Another cleanse may cause further pain.

Cause: A stone is lodged in the common bile duct.
Solution: Another cleanse might release the stone and solve the problem.

Cause: A stone cannot leave the gallbladder because it is too big to pass through the cystic duct.
Solution: Another cleanse may cause further pain.

What else can I do to relieve the pain?

Besides more cleansing, here are some other possible pain-relieving options:

- **Foot massage**
- Homeopathic remedies
- **Drink one tablespoon of Epsom salt dissolved in one cup of freshly-pressed grapefruit juice.**
- Lobelia herb
- **Castor oil pack**
- Walking
- **Hot bath or sauna**

What other suggestions can prevent cleansing discomfort?

- Don’t try to do too much without making the necessary dietary changes (example: eating two or three fatty meals in a row without drinking enough water)
- Mixing the olive oil and juice in a blender first, works better for some people than stirring by hand, resulting in less discomfort .
- Calcified stones in the gallbladder can cause pain from cleansing.

Disclaimer

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No guarantees are offered or implied in any way, shape, or form whatsoever as to the results, if any, that you might achieve from this information. Your use of the information in this book is entirely at your own risk. Only you are responsible for your own decisions. Please decide wisely.

Although the contents of this book are based on the successful experience of thousands of individuals and on the research of well-respected medical authorities, please consider this book solely as information, not medical advice.

Talk with your doctor before trying any of the remedies discussed in this book, especially if you have chronic health problems. Pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children should not follow the recommendations in this book and should consult a doctor for their specific medical needs.

That said, we wish you the best in your quest to regain your health, save your gallbladder, and live a more enjoyable life.